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## The Shepherd of Hermas

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# **The Shepherd of Hermas**

**TRANSLATED INTO ENGLISH, WITH AN  
INTRODUCTION AND NOTES**

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**RIVINGTONS  
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E. W. B. Nicholson  
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## INTRODUCTION.

**I**T occurred to the author of the present translation, while collecting materials illustrative of the earliest period of Christian antiquity, that many English readers might be interested to see a translation of the oldest Christian allegory, a work which, though never unanimously accepted as canonical in the early Church, was generally considered to be inspired, was publicly read in churches, and cited as an authority in controversies. It has indeed been already translated into English,<sup>1</sup> but has only appeared as part of a larger collection, and in connexion with works not so likely to interest the general reader. But the Shepherd of Hermas has a distinctive interest of its own, not shared by any other work of the period of the Apostolic Fathers, as being the oldest example of those allegorical

<sup>1</sup> The Latin version was translated into English by Archbishop Wake, and there is a translation of the Greek text in the Ante-Nicene Christian Library, now in the course of publication by Messrs. Clark of Edinburgh.

methods of treating Christian doctrine, which have had so much influence on the spread of our religion, and which, in the hands of Dante and Bunyan, have almost reached the dignity of a religious epic. Though far inferior either to the *Divina Commedia* or the *Pilgrim's Progress*, in literary merit, the *Shepherd of Hermas* seems scarcely to deserve the neglect that has succeeded to its former popularity, and it is hoped that a separate edition of the book may not be unacceptable. It will readily be understood that the few introductory remarks, as well as the notes at the end of the volume, do not profess to deal exhaustively with the various questions connected with the criticism of *Hermas*, but merely to supply such information as is necessary to render the work intelligible to English readers.

The relation which the *Shepherd of Hermas* occupies to the rest of the works of the Apostolic Fathers is rather a peculiar one. The works of Clement, Barnabas, Polycarp, and Ignatius all took the form of Epistles, and were evidently modelled on the style of the Epistles of the New Testament. They do not profess to be systematic treatises, but merely letters of exhortation, or friendly reproof, addressed by the chief pastor to those likely to attend to his influence. Nor do they lay any claim to inspiration, or to any other authority than that supposed to attach to the personal character and influence of the author. The *Shepherd of Hermas* is something quite different to these: it is not an

Epistle, but an allegory or religious romance. There is a definite, though not very successful attempt at a literary treatment of the subject. The work is divided into three parts, it contains dialogues and descriptions; the general method of treatment is very unlike either the New Testament, or the works of the other Apostolic Fathers. It speaks, too, with a tone of authority greater than that of St. Clement or St. Polycarp. It would, perhaps, be going too far to say that the book absolutely claims inspiration. The language put into the mouth of an angel or spiritual being on religious subjects would naturally be definite and authoritative. The book with which it would most immediately challenge comparison is the Book of Revelations, and yet it differs in a good deal from this. It contains few prophecies,<sup>1</sup> and its views are of the earth, not of the heaven: the imagery and descriptions employed are of the very quietest character; then, too, the predominance of the ethical element in *Hermas* distinguishes it widely from the Book of Revelations. These peculiarities create an interest in the book which unfortunately there exist but few means for gratifying; something, though not much, can be gathered from the internal evidence offered by the book itself.

The author, one would conjecture, was not a man of learning, and yet not destitute of education, as the work contains reference to *Arcadia*<sup>2</sup> and

<sup>1</sup> For the prophecies in *Hermas*, cf. *Vis.* ii. 3, *Vis.* iv. 2, 3.

<sup>2</sup> *Sim.* ix. 1.

the Sibyl.<sup>1</sup> He would seem also not to have been a Jew, as he represents himself as mistaking the personification of the Church for the Sibyl, a remark which a Jewish convert would hardly have made. That he was an inhabitant of Rome there can be little doubt; but, unfortunately, the few introductory sentences, in which he professes to describe his early life there, differ so widely in the various versions that no reliance can be placed upon them; nor can we gather from the book what was his position in the Church, though it would seem not to have been one of authority, from the severity with which he at times accuses the practices of the Church leaders at Rome.<sup>2</sup> He describes himself as being married, and having children and a sister;<sup>3</sup> as his children are mentioned as having arrived at the age of independent action, we may suppose the author to have been of mature years. An inhabitant of Rome, not belonging to the highest class, yet apparently in independent circumstances, for he mentions his home, and makes no allusion to any occupation or profession: fond of excursions in the beautiful country that surrounds the capital; fond also of religious meditation in his house: all this we can assert with some certainty of the author, as being gathered from the book itself. But the external evidence respecting the age and authorship of the Shepherd has been, from the very earliest period, a matter of great controversy, — controversy which cannot yet be regarded as

<sup>1</sup> Vis. ii. 4.    <sup>2</sup> Vis. iii. 9; Sim. ix. 26.    <sup>3</sup> Vis. ii. 2, 3.

having received a satisfactory solution, and of which only a sketch can be attempted here.

That the Shepherd was written, or is supposed to be written, by a person of the name of Hermas, is undoubtedly to be gathered from the book itself; but who this Hermas was does not seem to have been satisfactorily ascertained. Some writers attributed the work to a Hermas, the brother of Pope Pius I.;<sup>1</sup> and the Ethiopic version of the work contains the curious assertion that it was written by the Apostle Paul, under the title of "Hermes," given to him by the inhabitants of Lystra; but the general opinion in the early ages of the Church undoubtedly was that it was written by the Hermas to whom St. Paul sends his greeting in the Epistle of the Romans, chap. xvi., v. 14.

<sup>1</sup> The authorship of the Shepherd is ascribed to the Hermas or Hermes, the brother of Pope Pius I., in the Muratorian fragment on the Canon. "*Pastorem vero nuperrime temporibus nostris in urbe Roma Hermas conscripsit sedente in Cathedra urbis Romæ ecclesiæ Pio Episcopo fratre ejus, et ideo legi eum quidem oportet, se publicare vero in ecclesiâ populo neque inter Prophetas completum numero neque inter Apostolos in finem temporum potest.*"

In a poem by the Pseudo-Tertullian against Marcion:—

Post hunc deinde Pius, Hermas cui germine frater,  
Angelicus Pastor, qui tradita verba locutus.

And in a letter, falsely ascribed to Pius himself. The two latter authorities can hardly be considered as of great weight. The antiquity of the Muratorian fragment makes its statements of great importance, but they can hardly be considered as decisive, or as supplying more than information as to the views current at the period at which it was drawn up.

But Irenæus and Clement of Alexandria, the earliest writers whose quotations from the Pastor have come down to us, do not seem to have ascribed it to the Hermas mentioned by St. Paul. So far as is known, it was first attributed to him by Origen, who states it as his own opinion, that the Hermas mentioned in the Epistle was the author of the Shepherd. There seems, however, no real reason for supposing that it proceeded from his pen, and it is most probably not the work of a contemporary of the Apostles, for their deaths are referred to:<sup>1</sup> yet, as it is quoted as Scripture by Irenæus, it could not well be of much later date than the close of the first century of the Christian era, and thus could hardly have been written during the Episcopate of Pius I., 139–155 A.D., as asserted by the Muratorian canon.<sup>2</sup> The date of its authorship would thus seem to fall between the period of the Apostolic Hermas and the Hermas, brother of Pius I., *i.e.*, from about 90 to 110 A.D.; but whether it was really written by a person of the name of Hermas seems open to question. It is possible that a name well known in the Christian Church was employed by an anonymous author to give vivacity and reality to his work. At any rate, whoever the author of the book may have been, it carries us back into the very earliest period of Christian

<sup>1</sup> Sim. ix. 16.

<sup>2</sup> The severity with which Hermas criticised the authorities of the Church at Rome is an additional reason for concluding that it was not written by a brother of the Pope. Cf. Hilgenfeld, *Proleg.* p. xv.

antiquity, and dealing with religious subjects in a more familiar way than is found in the works of the other ecclesiastical writers of the Apostolic period, it is most valuable as supplying a specimen of the ordinary tone of thought and feeling in the early Church.

The opinion of the fathers concerning its authority seems to have passed through three stages. At the very earliest period it was undoubtedly regarded as on a level with the canonical books of the New Testament, being distinctly quoted by Irenæus as Scripture. Next, it was quoted with hesitation, as a book about which doubts were entertained, but was still one to be treated with great respect. Lastly, it was classed among the apocryphal books, and regarded as of no weight. The following quotations will serve to mark these changes of opinion :—

Irenæus,<sup>1</sup> who lived between 120 and 200 A.D., distinctly quotes it as scripture. “Well, therefore, spake the scripture which sayeth, First of all believe that there is one God who created and appointed all things,” quoting the first of the Commandments of Hermas.

Clement of Alexandria<sup>2</sup> (193-217 A.D.), evidently

<sup>1</sup> Irenæus, quoted by Eusebius, HE. V, 8, 7. οὐ μόνον δὲ εἶδεν, ἀλλὰ καὶ ἀποδέχεται τὴν τοῦ Ποιμένος γραφὴν, λέγων Καλῶς οὖν εἶπεν ἡ γραφὴ ἡ λέγουσα Πρῶτον πάντων, πιστεύουσιν ὅτι εἰς ἐστὶν ὁ θεὸς ὁ τὰ πάντα κτίσας καὶ καταρτίσας καὶ τὰ ἐξῆς.

<sup>2</sup> Clem. Al., Strom. i. 29, 181. Θείως τοίνυν ἡ δύναμις ἡ τῷ Ἐρμα κατὰ ἀποκάλυψιν λαλοῦσα. Τα ὁράματα, φησί, καὶ τὰ ἀποκαλύμματα διὰ τοὺς διψύχους τοὺς διαλογιζομένους ἐν ταῖς καρδίαις αὐτῶν, εἰ ἄρα ἐστι ταῦτα ἢ οὐκ ἐστιν. Cf. Vis. iii. 4.



considered the book to have been inspired. "By inspiration, therefore, came the power of Hermas, which spake by revelation. The visions," he says, "and the revelations are for the double-minded, even for those who dispute in their hearts whether these things are so or no."

In Origen (186-253 A.D.) we mark a different method of alluding to Hermas. His own opinion seems to have been that it was inspired. In one passage he quotes it as scripture.<sup>1</sup> He acknowledges, however, that its inspiration was not universally accepted,<sup>2</sup> and in one passage remarks that some persons despised the book<sup>3</sup>—an observation worth noticing, considering the early period at which Origen wrote. The following is the passage which attributes the authorship to the Hermas mentioned by St. Paul. It occurs in Origen's commentary on the Epistle to the Romans. "Salute Asyncretus, Phlegon, Hermes, Patrobas, Hermas, and the brethren who are with him. A simple salutation is given to these, nor is there any mark of praise added. But I am of opinion that this Hermas is the author

<sup>1</sup> Commentary on Hosea, Opp. iii. 439. *καὶ ἐν τῷ Ποιμένι δὲ τὴν οἰκοδομὴν τοῦ πύργου διὰ πολλῶν μὲν λίθων οἰκοδομουμένην ἐξ ἐνὸς δὲ λίθου φαινομένην εἶναι τὴν οἰκοδομὴν, τί ἄλλο ἢ τὴν ἐκ πολλῶν συμφωνίαν καὶ ἐνότητά σημαίνει ἡ γραφή.*

<sup>2</sup> Commentary on St. Matt. xiv. 21; Opp. iii. 644. *εἰ δὲ χρή τολμήσαντα καὶ ἀπὸ τινος φερομένης μὲν ἐν τῇ ἐκκλησίᾳ (var. l. ἐν ταῖς ἐκκλησίαις) γραφῆς, οὐ παρὰ πᾶσι δὲ ὁμολογουμένης εἶναι θείας τὸ πρῶτον παραμυθῆσασθαι, ληφθεῖν δὲ ἡ τοῦ Ποιμενος κτλ.*

<sup>3</sup> Opp. i. 168: *διὰ τοῦτο ἡμεῖς καὶ τὸ ἐν τῷ ὑπὸ τινων καταφρονουενῶ βιβλίῳ, τῷ Ποιμένι — οὕτω διηγούμεθα.*

of the book called The Shepherd, a writing which appears to me to be very useful, and is in my own opinion divinely inspired.”<sup>1</sup>

In Eusebius<sup>2</sup> (264-340 A.D.) we find a considerable difference in the allusions to Hermas. He distinctly excludes it from the books acknowledged to be canonical, classing it among the spurious, or, at best, doubtful books. Some, he remarks, say that the Shepherd was written by the Hermas to whom St. Paul alludes in the Epistle to the Romans, but others deny this, consequently the work could not be reckoned among those universally acknow-

<sup>1</sup> Commentary on the Epistle to the Romans, xvi. 14 (Opp. iv. 683). “*Salutate Asyncritum, Phlegontem, Hermen, Patroban, Herman et qui cum eis sunt fratres. de istis simplex est salutatio, nec aliquid eis insigne laudis adiungitur. puto tamen quod Hermas iste sit scriptor libelli illius qui Pastor appellatur. quae scriptura valde mihi utilis videtur et ut puto divinitus inspirata. quod vero nihil eis laudis adscripsit, illa, opinor, est causa, quia videtur, sicut scriptura illa declarat, post multa peccata ad poenitentiam fuisse conversus. et ideo nec opprobrium ei aliquod adscripsit. didicerat enim a scriptura non impropere homini convertenti se a peccato. neque laudis aliquid tribuit, quia adhuc positus erat sub angelo poenitentiae, a quo tempore oportuno Christo rursus deberet offerri.*”

<sup>2</sup> Euseb. HE. III, 5, 6. He acknowledged that it was read in churches and quoted as an authority. ἐπεὶ δὲ ὁ αὐτὸς ἀπόστολος (Paulus) ἐν ταῖς ἐπὶ τέλει προσηρῆσει τῆς πρὸς Ῥωμαίους (XVI, 14) μνήμην πεποιήται μετὰ τῶν ἄλλων καὶ Ἑρμᾶ, οὗ φασὶν ὑπάρχειν τὸ τοῦ Ποιμένους βιβλίον, ἰστέον ὡς καὶ τοῦτο πρὸς μὲν τῶν ἀντιλέλεκται, δι’ οὓς οὐκ ἂν ἐν ὁμολογουμένοις τεθείη, ὑφ’ ἐτέρων δὲ ἀναγκαῖστατον, οἷς μάλιστα δεῖ στοχεύσεως εἰσαγωγικῆς, κέκριται. ὅθεν ἤδη καὶ ἐν ἐκκλησίαις ἴσμεν

ledged. In another passage<sup>1</sup> he takes a still more unfavourable view of the authority of the book. "Among the spurious books let there be reckoned, the Acts of Paul, the book called The Shepherd, and the Revelation of Peter, and, in addition to these, the Epistle ascribed to Barnabas, and the so called Doctrines of the Apostles. And, besides these, the Revelation of John, which some, as I said, set aside, but others reckon among the acknowledged books. And ere this some have reckoned among these the Gospel according to the Hebrews, in which they, among the Hebrews, who have accepted Christ, especially delight. All these would fall under the class of disputed books."

The view of Athanasius<sup>2</sup> (296-373 A.D.) on the

αὐτὸ δεδημοσιευμένον, καὶ τῶν παλαιωτάτων δὲ συγγραφέων  
κεκρημένους τινὰς αὐτῷ κατέλιθα.

<sup>1</sup> Euseb., HE. III, 25, 4, 5. ἐν τοῖς νόθοις κατατετάχθω  
καὶ τῶν Παύλου πράξεων ἡ γραφή, ὃ τε λεγόμενος Ποιμὴν καὶ ἡ  
ἀποκάλυψις Πέτρου καὶ πρὸς τούτοις ἡ φερομένη Βαρνάβα ἐπι-  
στολὴ καὶ τῶν ἀποστόλων αἱ λεγόμεναι διδασκαί· ἐτι τε, ὡς ἔφην,  
ἡ Ἰωάννου ἀποκάλυψις, εἰ φανεῖη, ἦν τινες, ὡς ἔφην, ἀθετοῦσιν,  
ἕτεροι δὲ ἐγκρίνουσι τοῖς ὁμολογουμένοις. ἤδη δ' ἐν τούτοις τινὲς  
καὶ τὸ καθ' Ἑβραίους εὐαγγέλιον κατέλεξαν, ᾧ μάλιστα Ἑβραίων  
οἱ τὸν Χριστὸν παραδεξάμενοι χαίρουσι. ταῦτα μὲν πάντα τῶν  
ἀντιλεγομένων ἂν εἴη.

<sup>2</sup> Opp. I. 2, 963. ἕνεκά γε πλείονος ἀκριβείας προστίθηναι καὶ  
τοῦτο γράφων ἀναγκαίως, ὡς ὅτι ἐστὶ καὶ ἕτερα βιβλία τούτων  
ἐξωθεν, οὐ κανονιζόμενα μὲν, τετυπωμένα δὲ παρὰ τῶν πατέρων  
ἀναγινώσκεσθαι τοῖς ἄρτι προσερχομένοις καὶ βουλομένοις κατη-  
εῖσθαι τὸν τῆς εὐσεβείας λόγον· Σοφία Σολομῶντος καὶ Σοφία  
Σιράχ καὶ Εὐσθήρ καὶ Ἰουδίθ καὶ Τοβίας καὶ διδασχὴ καλουμένη τῶν  
ἀποστόλων καὶ Ποιμὴν, καὶ ὁμοῦ, ἀγαπητοί, κάκεινων κανονιζο-

subject is more favourable, and may be recommended as supplying a judicious estimate of the real merits of the work. He expressly excludes the Shepherd from the canonical books of the Bible, and classes it with the Apocryphal books of the Old Testament. Still he pronounces it to be a most useful book, and quotes<sup>1</sup> as authoritative the first commandment, as quoted before by Irenæus.

The authority of Hermas in the Western Church does not seem to have been so great.<sup>2</sup> St. Jerome,<sup>3</sup>

*μένων καὶ τούτων ἀναγινωσκομένων, οὐδαμοῦ τῶν ἀποκρύφων μνήμη. ἀλλὰ αἰρετικῶν ἐστὶν ἐπίνοια, γραφόντων μὲν, ὅτε θέλουσιν, αὐτά, χαριζομένων δὲ καὶ προστιθέντων αὐτοῖς χρόνους, ἢ ὡς παλαιὰ προφέροντες πρόφασιν ἔχουσιν ἀπατᾶν ἐκ τούτων τοὺς ἀκεραίους.*

<sup>1</sup> Opp. I, 49.

<sup>2</sup> Rufinus Aquitanus, whose period is between 345-410 A.D. classed it among the *libri ecclesiastici*, as opposed to the *libri canonici*:—"Sciendum tamen est, quod et alii libri sunt, qui non canonici, sed ecclesiastici a maioribus appellati sunt: ut est Sapientia Salomonis et alia Sapientia quae dicitur filii Syrach, qui liber apud Latinos hoc ipso generali vocabulo Ecclesiasticus appellatur, quo vocabulo non auctor libelli, sed scripturae qualitas cognominata est. eiusdem ordinis est libellus Tobiae et Judith et Maccabaeorum libri. in Novo vero Testamento libellus, qui dicitur Pastoris sive Hermatis, [et] qui appellatur Duae viae vel Iudicium Petri." Exposition of the Apostles' Creed, c. 38.

<sup>3</sup> Opp. ii. 846, "Herman, cuius Apostolus Paulus ad Romanos (XVI, 14) scribens meminit: 'Salutate Asyncritum, Phlegonta, Herman, Patrobam, Hermen, et qui cum eis fratres sunt,' asserunt auctorem esse libri, qui appellatur Pastor et apud quasdam Graeciae ecclesias iam publice legitur. revera utilis liber, multique de eo scriptorum veterum usurpavere testimonia, sed apud Latinos pene ignotus est."

whose period falls in the latter part of the fourth century writes :—"They say that the Hermas, of whom the Apostle Paul makes mention in his Epistle to the Romans, is the author of the book which is called the Shepherd, and it is at the present day publicly read in certain of the churches of Greece. It is undoubtedly a useful book, and many ancient writers have quoted it as of authority, but among the Latins it is almost unknown."

In another passage<sup>1</sup> St. Jerome severely criticises a passage in Vision iv. 2, in which an angel is said to preside over reptiles.

Finally, the decree of Gelasius I.,<sup>2</sup> "*De libris recipiendis et non recipiendis*," condemned the book as apocryphal. Prosper Aquitanus<sup>3</sup> stigmatised it openly as a work of no authority; and even in the Eastern Church, Nicephorus,<sup>4</sup> who died A.D. 828, classed it with the works of Ignatius and Polycarp, as outside the canon of the New Testament. Since

<sup>1</sup> Opp. VI, 604. "Ex quo liber ille apocryphus stultitiae condemnandus est, in quo scriptum est, quemdam angelum nomine Tyri praeesse reptilibus (cf. Herm. Past. Vis. IV, 2 p. 32, 2 sq.), et in hanc similitudinem piscibus quoque et arboribus et bestiis universis proprios in custodiam angelos assignatos."

<sup>2</sup> The date of the decretum *de libris recipiendis et non recipiendis* is about A.D. 500, c. vi. 18. "Liber qui vocatur *Pastoris apocryphus*."

<sup>3</sup> Prosper Aquitanus. *Contra collatorem*, c. xxx., "Post illud autem nullius auctoritatis testimonium, quod disputationi suae de libello *Pastoris* inseruit." about 432 A.D.

<sup>4</sup> It is classed among the *ἀπόκρυφα τῆς νέας διαθήκης*, in his *Stichometria*.

that time it shared the fate of the other apocryphal books of the New Testament, and fell rapidly into disrepute. The Greek original disappeared, and it was long known only in a Latin version. But a few years ago a Greek version of the greater part of *Hermas* was discovered by Simonides in Mount Athos. This is now called the *Codex Lipsiensis*.<sup>1</sup> The character of the discoverer caused it at first to be regarded with suspicion, and it was asserted by Tischendorf that it was in reality not the Greek original, but a translation from the Latin version into Greek, executed in the middle ages. The recently discovered *Codex Sinaiticus*, however, was found to contain a considerable portion of a Greek version of *Hermas* substantially the same as that of the *Codex Lipsiensis*; and as the *Codex Sinaiticus* can hardly be put at a later date than 520 A.D., it can scarcely be doubted that the Greek version which it contains is the original of *Hermas*, as it

1 I have not seen either the *Codex Lipsiensis* or the *Codex Sinaiticus*. The *Codex Lipsiensis* is said to consist of three leaves of an original manuscript found in Mount Athos by Simonides, and a copy of the remainder. It contains the Greek of the whole of the Shepherd with the exception of *Sim. ix. 30-33*, and *Sim. x.* The *Codex Sinaiticus* contains the Visions and a portion of the Commandments (*Vis. i. 1, —, Mand. ii. p. 38, 11 et Mand. iii. iv., fragmenta. Hilgenfeld*). Tischendorf has retracted his objections to the Greek text of the *Codex Lipsiensis* since the discovery of the *Codex Sinaiticus*; Hilgenfeld and Canon Westcott accept the Greek as genuine. But it is attacked at length by Mr. Donaldson in his *History of Christian Literature and Doctrine*, vol. i. p. 309.

cannot be supposed that the Greek version had then disappeared. The style of the Greek too is, on the whole, what might have been expected from the supposed date and authorship: Hellenistic, not entirely free from grammatical errors, by no means equal in power and dignity to the books of the New Testament, but simple and intelligible, and well adapted for popular reading.

This short survey of the literary history of *Hermas* suggests one or two reflections. It is difficult to avoid a feeling of surprise at its extreme popularity during the Ante-Nicene period.<sup>1</sup> Much of this popularity was due undoubtedly to the supposition that it had proceeded from the pen of a friend and contemporary of St. Paul, but more to the fact that it was the earliest and, for a time, the only specimen of

<sup>1</sup> A curious contrast to the opinion of the early church on the merits of *Hermas* is found in Mosheim's *Ecclesiastical History*, vol. i. chap. ii. "The work which is called the *Shepherd of Hermas*, because the angel who bears the principal part in it is represented in the form and habit of a shepherd, was composed in the second century by *Hermas*, who was brother to Pius, Bishop of Rome. This whimsical and visionary writer has taken the liberty to invent several dialogues or conversations between God and the angels, in order to insinuate in a more easy and agreeable manner the precepts which he thought useful and salutary into the minds of his readers. But, indeed, the discourse which he puts into the mouths of these celestial beings is more insipid and senseless than what we commonly hear among the meanest of the multitude." Mosheim could hardly have read the work that he criticised so severely, as the *Shepherd of Hermas* contains no dialogues between God and the angels.

the Christian allegory. It is indeed the oldest religious romance, the first extended attempt to make the language and events of every-day life a vehicle for religious teaching. This attraction it has long lost, and any modern reader approaches the study of it at a disadvantage. Next, we might remark on the interesting circumstance that the Shepherd of Hermas seems for a time to have been classed with the Book of Revelations, as works whose acceptance was open to controversy;<sup>1</sup> and we cannot but admire the wisdom of the early Church which included the Book of Revelations in the canon, and excluded Hermas. We do not seem to have exact information as to what finally determined its exclusion and deprived it of its popularity. The use made of it by the Arians, who imagined that it supported their tenets, has been alleged as a reason; and it is certain that after the Arian controversy it fell rapidly into disrepute. Still, the admiration which St. Athanasius expresses for it would seem to negative the notion that it was really considered as tainted with Arianism. Most likely the growth of a more robust and severe species of theological literature caused a work like the Shepherd of Hermas to seem unworthy of the place it had occupied. Though doubtless many of the early fathers accepted the story of Hermas as literally true, it is evidently a romance, like Pilgrim's Progress or the Divina Commedia; nor is there any reason for charging the author with dishonesty in adopting

<sup>1</sup> Euseb. H. E. iii. 25, 4, 5.



this form of composition. But there would have been serious difficulties in including a work of this kind, however unexceptionable its doctrines might be (and Hermas may claim to be considered, with one or two minor exceptions, perfectly orthodox) in the canon of scripture. The commencement too, which is that of an ordinary love-story, is quite unlike the dignity and gravity of the New Testament. On the whole, there seems little reason to differ from the estimate formed of the book by St. Athanasius, who classes it with the wisdom of Solomon and the other books of the Apocrypha, as not canonical, but useful reading for those who desire—*κατηχεῖσθαι τὸν τῆς εὐσεβείας λόγον*—"to be instructed in the word of righteousness."

It does not fall within the scope of the present introduction to offer any detailed account of the theological tendencies of the book. The series of quotations given from the early fathers is a sufficient guarantee for its doctrinal soundness. It was bitterly, and with some justice, attacked by Tertullian<sup>1</sup> and the Montanists on account of the exhortation to lenity in cases of the violation of the marriage tie; and St. Jerome criticised with a good deal of severity one of the characteristic doctrines of Hermas on the subject of angels.<sup>2</sup> Modern critics have considered that it exhibits a Judaizing tendency, and repre-

<sup>1</sup> Tertullian *De Pudicitia*, c. x. xx. The fourth commandment contains the doctrines to which he objected.

<sup>2</sup> *Opp.* vi. 604. Cf. *Vis.* iv. c. 2.

sents the last struggle of opinion between the Jewish and Gentile Christians at Rome, and the union which finally ensued.<sup>1</sup> As to its literary merits, these to a reader of our day may seem slight. The attempt to use the machinery of an allegory to inculcate a complete system of Christian faith and duty—this appears to have been the object of *Hermas*—is certainly not very happily carried out; the allegorical part is wanting in vivacity, and its curious, and in some cases almost grotesque, character detracts from the dignity of the ethical and religious teaching. Those who are acquainted with the earliest remains of Christian art will not fail to trace a certain correspondence between the literary character of *Hermas* and the artistic tone of the paintings and inscriptions of the Roman catacombs. The merit of both is rather in feeling and intention than in actual execution, the utmost religious fervour finding its efforts at expression defeated by a want of formative power, and an ignorance of the rules of art. Those, however, who can appreciate the relation which the early works of Christian art bear to the finished productions of a later period, will find the *Shepherd of Hermas* an interesting introduction to the study of Dante or Bunyan. It is with this view, rather than as a devotional manual, in which character it has long been superseded, that this edition of *Hermas* has been brought out. Yet the *Shepherd* is more than a mere literary curiosity; for though

<sup>1</sup> Hilgenfeld *Prolegomena*, p. xix.

no one would now wish to dispute the decision of Gelasius, which finally excluded it from the canon ; and though the spirit which pervades it is evidently one of imitation rather than of inspiration ; no one can fail to remark how its closeness, in point of time, to the later books of the New Testament, has given a kind of scriptural tone to the work. The Epistles of St. Peter and St. James are the books which it most closely resembles, particularly in the clear and unhesitating character of its statements, the fervent denunciations of wealth and luxury, and the censures levelled at the abuses which were beginning to spring up in the Church. And yet every one will see how far it falls short of the New Testament ; there is a want of depth and comprehensiveness in its doctrinal portion, a poverty of ideas which leads to a perpetual recurrence to the same notions, and a tone of mysticism from which the canonical books are free.

The book derives its title of the Shepherd or Pastor from one of the characters, an angel who appears to Hermas in the form of a shepherd, and is introduced at the end of the First Part. The work falls into three divisions, alluded to in the book itself, called The Visions, The Commandments, The Similitudes.

The First Part consists of five visions. The few introductory sentences are a little confused, and differ a good deal in the various versions, but the leading notion is sufficiently clear, and will remind the reader both of the opening of the *Divina Commedia* and of

Pilgrim's Progress. The writer, who describes himself by the name of *Hermas* (but who does not, as *Gieseler*<sup>1</sup> erroneously assumes, profess to be the *Hermas* mentioned in the Epistle to the Romans), is supposed to have wandered out into the country, in the neighbourhood of Rome, apparently into the district between Rome and Ostia, where a series of visions are presented to him, partly with regard to his own sins and those of his family, partly respecting the condition of the Church. In the third vision there is a fine comparison of the Church to a tower, which is worked out with a good deal of vivacity and power, and forms the leading idea of the book. In the fourth vision there is a curious passage about a monstrous animal which *Hermas* supposed to have met him, and one of his peculiar fanciful notions about the power of angels, strongly condemned by St. Jerome. The visions conclude with the introduction of the Shepherd, who gives his name to the work. He visits *Hermas* at his house, and informs him that an angel had sent him, as a companion for *Hermas* during the rest of his life. "I," he says, "am the shepherd to whom you have been entrusted." *Hermas* is now ordered by the shepherd to write down certain commandments, twelve in number. These form the second part of the work. They are chiefly on religious and moral subjects, such as faith in God, the avoidance of anger, fear, and grief. The first commandment contains the well-known passage on the unity of God,

<sup>1</sup> *Eccles. Hist.*, vol. i. cap. iii., note.

quoted by Irenæus as Scripture. The sixth commandment contains a curious account of the angels of good and evil supposed to attend upon men.

Amid a great deal that is fanciful in the commandments, especially about the influence of angels on the sins of men, and some laxity as to the method of dealing with offences against the marriage tie, there are passages of great beauty and ethical power. The eighth commandment may especially be quoted as a favourable specimen of the moral teaching of the early Church. The commandments afford some ground for the supposition that the Author of the Shepherd belonged to the Judaizing section of the Church, and it is certainly surprising to find no reference in them to the mediation of our Lord. This omission, however, must have arisen from the plan of this part of the work, for nothing can be more distinct than the language of Hermas on the subject in the *Similitudes*.<sup>1</sup> These form the Third Part of the book. They are ten in number, and are chiefly devoted to the drawing of religious and moral lessons from natural objects. The elm and the vine, trees in winter and summer, the shepherd and his sheep, are made, after a fashion not unlike that of the New Testament, to supply religious instruction. The ninth similitude contains a recurrence to the building of the tower, which is described at considerable length; and the book, though brought to a definite conclusion, ends rather abruptly with

<sup>1</sup> See particularly *Sim. ix. 12.*

the tenth similitude, which, with the conclusion of the ninth (chap. 30-33), only exists in Latin. The scene, with the exception of a part which is said to have taken place in Arcadia, is laid at Rome and the neighbouring country; and at Rome there can be little doubt that the work, though written in Greek, was composed.

A few peculiarities of the work may be mentioned, though it is difficult, in the absence of any information about the author, to draw any conclusion from them. There is no mention of the name of our Saviour, who is called the Son of God, nor is the word Christian found in the book. The Church, though repeatedly mentioned, has no qualifying adjective annexed to it; nor is there any mention of persons by name except the author Hermas, Maximus,<sup>1</sup> Clement, and Grapte,<sup>2</sup> who cannot be identified with certainty, though Clement is generally supposed to have been the Bishop of Rome. There are no direct quotations from Scripture in the book; nor does the author allude to any book of the Old and New Testament, though he had evidently read the Gospels of St. Matthew and St. Luke, and the Epistle of St. James. But there is a quotation by name from the lost Apocryphal book of Eldad and Modad.<sup>3</sup> There are allusions to baptism,<sup>4</sup> but none to the Eucharist. Bishops, presbyters, and deacons are mentioned,<sup>5</sup> and certain persons in the Church,

<sup>1</sup> Vis. ii. 3.

<sup>2</sup> Vis. ii. 4.

<sup>3</sup> Vis. ii. 3.

<sup>4</sup> Vis. iii. 3; Mand. iv. 3; Sim. ix. 16.

<sup>5</sup> Vis. iii. 5; Vis. ii. 4.

called *προηγούμενοι* and *πρωτοκαθεδρίται*,<sup>1</sup> perhaps only general terms for the leading members. The whole work, however, has evidently the character of a book intended for those who were already Christians, who had the Scriptures in their hands, and were in the daily use of the ordinances of the Church, as there is no attempt to supply explanation, either as to the things mentioned or omitted; but the absence of any definite allusion either to persons or things certainly gives a peculiar tone to the work.

A few words may perhaps be added as to the literary merits of *The Shepherd*, and especially on its relation to Dante, Milton, and Bunyan. There are no direct imitations of *Hermas* in any of these writers, for though the commencement, both of the *Inferno* and the *Pilgrim's Progress*, is not unlike the early part of the *Shepherd*, the resemblance is most likely an accidental one. The weakness of the poetical and imaginative element in *Hermas* is that which chiefly distinguishes him from the later Christian poets. Dante and Milton wrote in verse, and *Pilgrim's Progress* might, with little difficulty, be turned into a poem, but it would be difficult to versify the *Shepherd of Hermas*. Though the work contains many descriptions of natural objects, they are described in the language of prose rather than of poetry, often catalogued rather than described. The character of *Hermas*, which was at first invested with a certain amount of personal interest, soon loses it, and he becomes the mere

<sup>1</sup> Vis. iii. 9.

asker of questions from his heavenly guide. The pathos and condensed power of Dante are entirely wanting, so, too, is the vivacity, and, it may be added, the vulgarity of Bunyan. The great merit of *Hermas* is, after all, the earnestness and the desire to do good, which are evident in every part of his book ; hence he is quite above the weakness of literary ambition ; there are no fine passages, no attempts at display, either of learning or language ; and when the story occasionally assumes a rhetorical form, it is evidently owing rather to the flow of the ideas than to any desire to produce an effect of eloquence. The various objects of nature to be seen then, as now, in the neighbourhood of Rome furnished the materials for his teaching. The sheep pasturing, the shepherds in their wild and picturesque dress, the vines and the elms, the Alban lake, with the towers and villas built around it, the hills, which bound the plain in which the great city lies,—these were all objects which, to the eye of *Hermas*, were full of religious instruction, just as the exploits of the popes and warriors of the mediæval period were to Dante, and the pilgrimage of human life to Bunyan.

These materials he dealt with in a way which excited the utmost interest among his contemporaries, men in all probability of but little education, accustomed to view their religion through the medium of oriental imagery, and to whom it must have been like the opening of a new world of reflection and feeling, to find the familiar objects of



their own every-day life invested with religious associations. The vineyards and fields of central Italy, consecrated hitherto to Ceres and Bacchus, and full of associations which, however interesting to us, must, to a Christian of the early ages of the Church, have been replete with horror, became, as it were, impressed into the service of Christianity, and could be made the scene of religious meditation, not less than the Lake of Gennesareth or the Mount of Olives. No such influence was ever exerted either by Dante or Bunyan as fell to the lot of Hermas during the Ante-Nicene period. The influence of "Paradise Lost" upon the religious feeling of our own country during the last two centuries alone admits of comparison with it. All allegorical treatment of religious subjects are open to objection on account of the inevitable indefiniteness of their teaching, and have consequently always been regarded with suspicion by exact theologians. Hermas has by no means escaped this fate, and every possible variety of doctrinal error has at different times been imputed to his work. The opinion, however, of those best qualified to judge in our own day seems to be gradually returning to the views of the more sober admirers of Hermas during the Ante-Nicene period. The book is again read and quoted with respect. At a time when so many of our own countrymen are enabled to familiarise themselves with the scenes in which the visions of Hermas were supposed to have been witnessed, some it is hoped may be interested to

learn how they presented themselves to the Christians of the first two centuries after the birth of our Lord. And it will be remarked that it is chiefly with the permanent features of Roman scenery that the book is concerned. Of the buildings of Rome, then in the height of their splendour, Hermas makes no mention, though the Tiber is named;<sup>1</sup> nor is there any allusion to the emperor or his court, or to any classical book or work of art, or to the wickedness of the Roman populace, though the persecutions of the Church are mentioned.<sup>2</sup> A sincere though somewhat mystical piety, and a simple love of nature, are the chief characteristics of his book, and it is to these that its great popularity in the Ante-Nicene period is to be attributed. Any extensive revival of this popularity can hardly be expected; but it may not be uninteresting, even to those who reserve their special admiration for the classical literature of the first two centuries, to see how a form of life and thought quite different to that best known to us was going on within the walls of Rome, and how a new literature was springing up with which Tacitus and Juvenal were unacquainted.

A slight sketch of the literature on the subject is subjoined for the advantage of those who may wish to turn to the study of the original. The only critical edition of the Greek text is that in the *Novum Testamentum extra Canonem Receptum* of Hilgenfeld.<sup>3</sup> It is from this that the following translation has been made.

<sup>1</sup> Vis. i. 1.    <sup>2</sup> Vis. iii. 2; Sim. ix. 28.    <sup>3</sup> Lipsiæ. 1866.

The Prolegomena of Hilgenfeld may be referred to as containing a considerable amount of information about the book, and the reader will find in Pearson's *Vindiciæ Ignatianæ* the chief ancient authorities on the subject.<sup>1</sup> The Greek text can hardly yet be considered to be in a satisfactory state, a thorough collation of the Codex Lipsiensis and the Codex Sinaiticus, and a comparison of these with the versions and the various quotations, being much to be desired.

The chief manuscript authorities are, the Codex Sinaiticus and the Codex Lipsiensis for the Greek text; and two Latin manuscripts called the Codex Vaticanus and the Codex Palatinus, which contain two distinct versions of *Hermas* into somewhat barbarous Latin.

The Codex Vaticanus stands at the head of a class of manuscripts of which representatives are to be found at Paris, and in the Lambeth and Bodleian Libraries. Previous to the discovery of the Greek text, it supplied the *textus receptus* of *Hermas*.

The Codex Palatinus, recently published by Dressel in his edition of the *Patres Apostolici*, contains a different and hitherto unknown version, not supported by any other manuscript. The Vaticanus and Palatinus are both in the Vatican Library at Rome, and are ascribed to the fourteenth century. A considerable number of quotations occur in various ecclesiastical writers. And there is an Ethiopic translation of the whole work, which was edited by

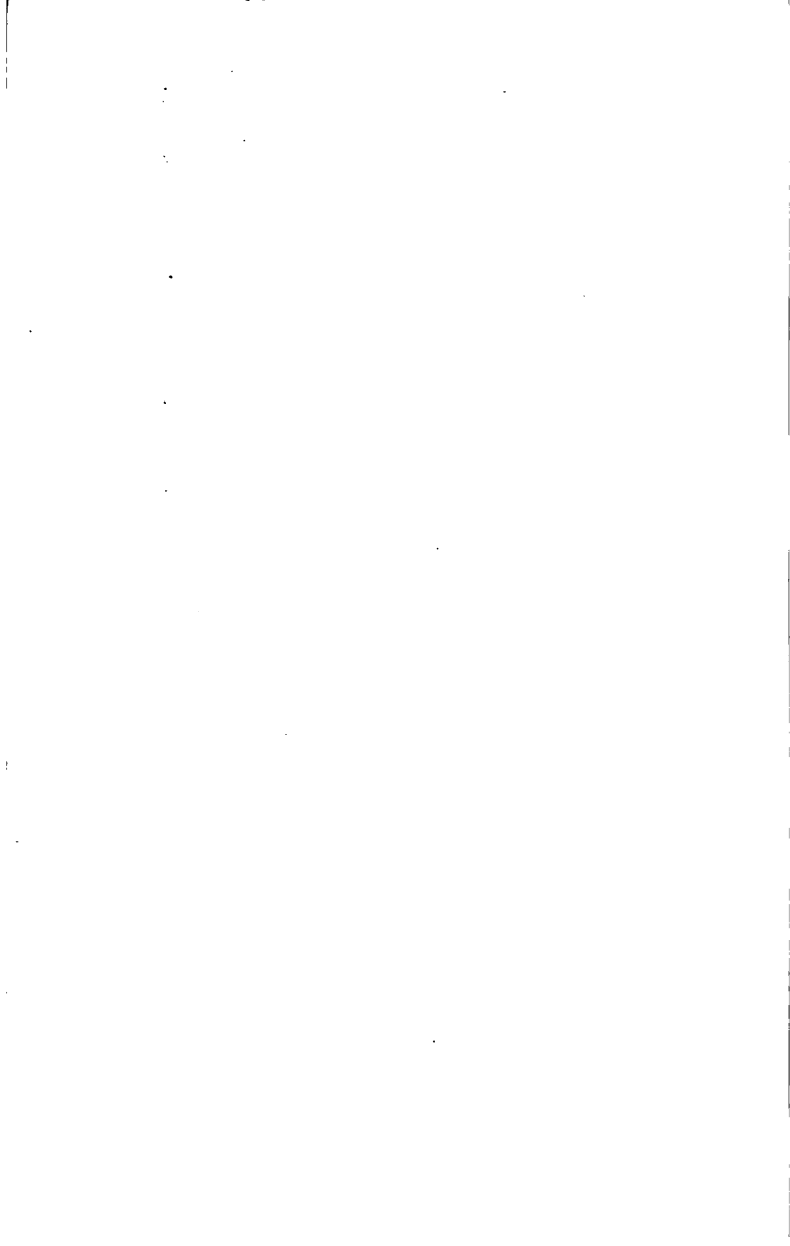
<sup>1</sup> Part i. cap. iv.

Antonius d'Abbadie, and published at Leipsig, 1860.

There are good editions of the Latin version in the *Patres Apostolici* of Hefele and Dressel; and a good deal of information on the literature and theology of the book is to be found in Mr. Westcott's *History of the Canon of the New Testament*, and in the first volume of Mr. Donaldson's *History of Christian Literature and Doctrine*. References to the chief German works on the subject are to be found in the *Prolegomena* of Hilgenfeld.

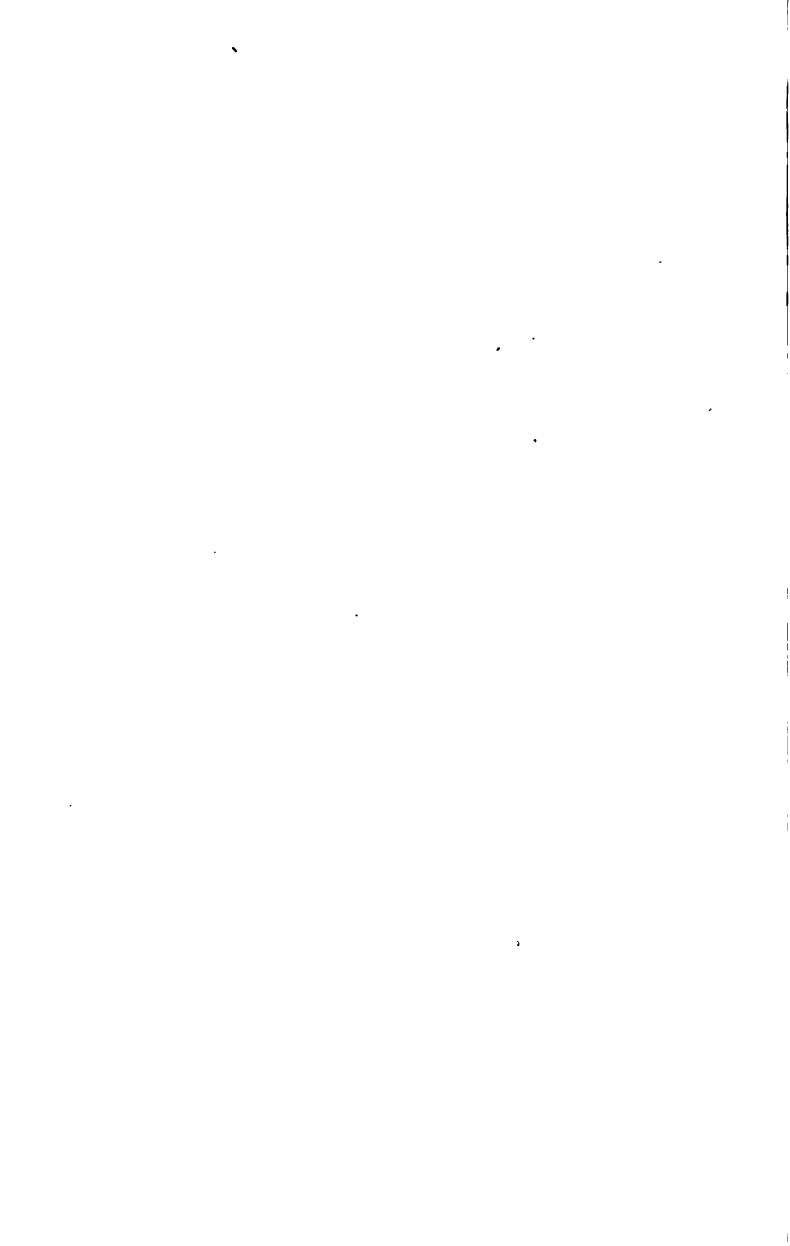
It may be added that though the Greek text has been pretty closely followed, the translation here given does not profess to be in every respect a literal one, the construction of the sentences being occasionally altered to render the book more acceptable to English readers. Nor has it been deemed necessary in so small a book to give the authority for every statement in the introduction and notes, the general acknowledgment given above being deemed sufficient.

CHRIST-CHURCH,  
*July 28, 1870.*



**Book First.**

**THE VISIONS.**



## The First Vision.

### *Concerning Evil Thoughts.*

#### I.

**H**E who had brought me up, sold me to a certain woman at Rome named Rhoda. Many years after, I met her again and began to love her as a sister. Some time after this, I saw her bathing in the river Tiber, and I gave her my hand and led her up out of the river. And when I beheld her beauty, I communed in my heart, and said, "Happy should I be, if I had a wife of such beauty and such a disposition as this." I merely reflected on this, and nothing more.

Now it came to pass, some time after, as I went into the villages, and glorified the creatures of God, because of their greatness, and excellence, and power, as I walked, I fell asleep. And the Spirit took me and carried me through a certain wilderness through which no man could travel, for the ground



was rocky and inaccessible, on account of the water.

And it came to pass, when I had crossed the river, and had come unto the plain ground, that I fell upon my knees, and began to pray unto the Lord and to confess my sins; and while I was praying the heaven opened, and I beheld the woman that I loved saluting me from heaven, and saying, "Hail, Hermas." And when I beheld her, I said unto her, "Lady, why doest thou thus?" But she answered and said, "I was taken up, in order that I might bring to light thy sins before the Lord." And I said unto her, "Hast thou become my accuser?" "No," said she; "but do thou hearken unto the words that I shall say unto thee. God, who dwelleth in heaven, and who hath made the things that are out of that which is not, is angry with thee because thou hast sinned against me." And I answered and said unto her, "I sinned against thee? In what way? Did I ever say unto thee a disgraceful word? Have I not always considered thee as my mistress? Did I not always respect thee as a sister? Why dost thou utter against me, Lady, these wicked and foul lies?" But she smiled and said unto me, "The desire for wickedness hath entered into thy heart. Seemeth it not unto thee to be an evil thing for a just man, that an evil desire should enter into his heart? Yea, it is a sin and a great one. For the just man deviseth just things, and by devising just things is his glory established in the heavens, and he findeth the Lord merciful unto him in all his ways;

but they who desire evil things in their hearts, bring upon themselves death and captivity, especially they who compass this world, and who glory in their wealth, and lay not hold of the good things to come. The souls of those that have no hope, but have cast themselves and their lives away, shall greatly rue it; but do thou pray unto God, and thy sins shall be healed, and those of thy whole house, and of all the saints."

## II.

And after that she had spoken these words, the heavens were closed, and I remained trembling all over and sorely troubled. And I said within myself, "If this sin be set down against me, how can I be saved? or how can I obtain forgiveness from God for the multitude of my sins? or with what words shall I ask the Lord to have mercy upon me?"

Now, while I was meditating on these things, and was musing on them in my heart, I beheld in front of me a great white chair made out of white fleeces of wool; and there came an aged woman, clad in very shining raiment, and having a book in her hand, and she sat down by herself on the chair and saluted me, saying, "Hail, Hermas!" And I, sorrowing and weeping, said unto her, "Hail, Lady!" And she said unto me, "Why art thou sorrowful, O Hermas, thou who wert wont to be patient, and good tempered, and ever smiling? why is thy countenance cast down? and why art thou

not joyful?" And I said unto her, "O Lady, I have been reproached by a most excellent woman, who said unto me that I had sinned against her." And she said unto me, "Far be it from the servant of God to do this thing. But of a surety a lust for her must have come into thine heart. Such an intent as this bringeth a charge of sin against the servant of God, for it is an evil and horrible intent that a devout and tried spirit should lust after an evil deed; and especially that the chaste Hermas should do so,—He who abstained from every evil desire, and was full of all simplicity, and of great innocence!"

### III.

"But it is not on account of this that God is angry with thee, but in order that thou mayest convert thy house, that hath done iniquity against the Lord, and against you who are their parents. But thou, because thou wert indulgent, didst not rebuke thy house, but didst allow it to become dreadfully wicked. On this account is the Lord angry with thee; but He shall heal all the evils that happened aforetime in thy house, for through the sins and iniquities of thy household, thou hast been corrupted by the affairs of this life. But the mercy of the Lord had compassion upon thee, and upon thy house, and shall make thee strong and establish thee in His glory; only be not slothful, but be of good courage and make thy house strong. For even as the smith, by smiting his work with the hammer,

is master over the thing that he willeth, so the daily word of righteousness is master over all iniquity. Fail not, therefore, to rebuke thy children, for I know that if they shall repent with all their heart, they shall be written in the book of life, together with the saints." And after these words of hers were ended, she saith unto me, "Dost thou wish to hear me read?" I say unto her, "Yea, Lady, I do wish it." She saith unto me, "Be thou a hearer, and hearken unto the glory of God." Then heard I, after a great and wonderful fashion, that which I was not able to remember, for all the words were terrible, and such as no man is able to bear. But the last words I remembered; for they were profitable for us, and mild. "Behold the God of power, who by His invisible mighty strength, and by His great wisdom, hath created the world, and by His magnificent counsel hath crowned His creation with glory, and by His mighty word hath fixed the heaven, and founded the earth upon the waters, and by His own wisdom and foresight hath formed His holy Church, which He hath also blessed! Behold, He changeth the heavens from their places, and the mountains, and the hills, and the stars, and everything becometh smooth before His elect, that He may give unto them the blessing that He hath promised with great glory and joy, if they shall keep with firm faith the laws of God which they have received."

## IV.

When, therefore, she had finished reading, and had risen up from the chair, there came four young men, and took up the chair, and departed towards the east. Then she called me, and touched my breast, and said unto me, "Hath my reading pleased thee?" And I say unto her, "These last things pleased me, but the former things were hard and harsh." But she spake unto me, saying, "These last are for the righteous, but the former are for the Gentiles and Apostates." And while she was yet speaking with me, lo! there appeared two men, and they took her up in their arms and departed unto the east, whither also the chair had gone. And she departed joyfully; and as she departed, she said, "Be of good courage, O Hermas!"

## The Second Vision.

*Concerning the Sins of the Family of Hermas.*

### I.

NOW I went into the villages, about the same season as last year, and as I walked about, I called to mind the vision of last year; and lo! the Spirit again taketh me, and beareth me away unto the same place as last year. When, therefore, I came unto the place, I bent my knees and began to pray unto the Lord and to glorify His name, because He had deemed me worthy, and had made known unto me my sins of former time. And after that I had arisen from my prayer, I beheld opposite to me the old woman whom I had seen last year, walking about and reading the little book. And she said unto me, "Art thou able to declare these things unto the elect of God?" I say unto her, "Lady, I am not able to remember so many things. Give me the little book, that I may copy it." "Take it," she said, "and return it unto me." I took it, therefore, and when I had retired unto a certain part of

the field, I copied it letter for letter. For the words I could not comprehend. When, therefore, I had finished the letters of the book, it was suddenly caught out of my hand, but by whom I saw not.

## II.

Then after that I had fasted for fifteen days, and had greatly besought the Lord, the meaning of the writing was revealed unto me. And these were the things that were written therein :—"Thy seed, O Hermas, have sinned **against** God, and have blasphemed the Lord, and have with great wickedness **abandoned** their parents : for they have been called betrayers of parents, and have not profited by betraying them. And they have, moreover, added unto their sins lasciviousness and abominable pollutions, and thus hath the measure of their iniquities been filled up. But make known these things unto all thy children, and unto thy wife, who shall be unto thee as a sister ; for even she refraineth not from over much speech, but sinneth therein. But after that she hath heard these words, she shall refrain, and shall find mercy. But after thou hast made known unto them the words that the Lord hath commanded me to reveal unto thee, then shall all their sins, which they in former time have committed, be forgiven them ; and forgiveness will be vouchsafed to all the saints who have sinned, for the sins that they have committed up to this day, if they repent with all their hearts and remove doubt

from their souls. The Lord hath sworn by His glory touching His elect, that there shall be no salvation for them if they sin any more after the appointed day, for there is a limit unto the repentance of the righteous. The days of repentance for all saints are fulfilled. Charge, therefore, the rulers of the Church, that they make straight their paths in righteousness, in order that they may with much glory fully receive the promises. Stand fast, therefore, oh ye who work righteousness, and doubt not, that your departure may be with the holy angels! Blessed are ye who abide the great tribulation that is coming! And blessed are they who shall not deny Him who is their life. For the Lord hath sworn by His Son, that they who deny their Lord shall be cut off from Him who is their life, even those who shall in time to come deny Him. But as for those who have denied Him in former times, through His great compassion He hath had mercy on them."

### III.

"But do thou, O Hermas, no longer bear malice against thy children, neither neglect thy sister, so shall they be cleansed from their former sins; for they shall be taught with the instruction of righteousness, if thou bear no malice against them; for malice worketh death. But thou, Hermas, hast had great afflictions in thy family because of the transgressions of thy house; for thou tookest no care for them, but wert careless, and wert mixed



up in evil deeds. But that which saveth thee is thy simplicity and thy great continence, and that thou didst not depart from the living God. These things shall save thee if thou continue steadfast, and they shall save all who do such things, even they who walk in innocence and simplicity. These shall prevail over all wickedness, and shall abide unto everlasting life. Blessed are all they who work righteousness, for they shall never be destroyed. Say unto Maximus, 'Behold affliction cometh; if it seem good unto thee, deny me again. The Lord is nigh unto all them that turn unto Him; even as it is written in the book of Eldad and Modad, who prophesied unto the people in the wilderness.'

#### IV.

Moreover, brethren, a revelation was made unto me while I slumbered, by a certain goodly young man, who said unto me, "Whom thinkest thou that the woman was, from whom thou receivedst the little book?" I say unto him, "The Sibyl." "Thou art at fault," said he; "it was not she. "Who, then, is she?" said I. "The Church," he replied. "But why is she represented as an old woman?" "Because," he replied, "she was made the first of all things. On this account is she old, and for her sake was the world created." And after that, I saw a vision in my house. The old woman came and asked me if I had already given the book to the elders. I said that I had not given it. "Thou

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hast done well," she said, "for I have words to add thereto. When, therefore, I shall have finished these sayings, they shall be made known through thee unto all the elect. Thou shalt therefore write two little books, and shalt send one to Clement and one to Grapte. But Clement shall send his copy unto the foreign cities, for unto him has this task been committed, and Grapte shall admonish the widows and the orphans. But thou shalt read the book unto this city, together with the elders, who preside over the Church."

## The Third Vision.

*Concerning the Building of the Tower.*

### I.

NOW I beheld a vision, brethren, after this fashion : After that I had fasted much, and had prayed unto the Lord to show me the revelation which He promised to show me by means of that old woman, on that very night did the old woman appear, and say unto me, "Since thou art so desirous and eager to know all things, go now into the country where thou art tarrying, and about the fifth hour I will appear unto thee, and show thee things that thou must behold." I asked her, saying, "Lady, unto what part of the country?" She saith unto me, "Unto whatever part thou wishest." I chose, therefore, a fair and retired spot. But before I spake unto her, and told her of the spot, she saith unto me, "I will come whither thou wishest. I went, therefore, brethren, into the country, and reckoned up the hours, and came unto the spot to which I had appointed to her to come,

and I beheld an ivory chair placed there, and on the chair there was a linen cushion, and on the cushion there was spread a covering of fine linen of flax. And when I saw these things lying, and no one at the place, I was astonished, and, as it were, a trembling seized upon me, and my hair stood on end, and a shuddering came over me, because I was alone. But when I came to myself, I remembered the glory of God, and, taking courage, I bent my knees, and again confessed my sins unto the Lord as before. But she came with the six young men whom I had seen before, and stood beside me, and listened unto me as I prayed and confessed my sins unto the Lord. And she touched me and said, "Cease, O Hermas, from continually making supplications about thy sins. Supplicate also for righteousness, that thou mayest receive a portion thereof in thine house." But she raised me by the hand, and led me to the chair, and said unto the young men, "Go and build." And after the young men had departed, and we were alone, she said unto me, "Sit down here." I said unto her, "Let the elders first sit down." She saith unto me, "Sit down, as I tell thee." And when I would have seated myself on the right side, she would not suffer it, but beckoned with her hand that I should sit on her left side. And as I pondered on this, and grieved that she would not allow me to sit on her right side, she saith unto me, "Art thou grieved, O Hermas? The place on the right side belongeth to others, even to those who have already pleased

God and suffered for His name. But many things are yet needful to enable thee to sit with them. But abide in thy simplicity, even as thou now abidest, and thou shalt sit down with them, and with as many as have done the works which these have done, and have endured what these also have endured."

## II.

"What is it," said I, "that they have endured?" "Listen," said she. "For the name of God they have endured scourgings, imprisonment, great tribulation, crucifixions, wild beasts. On this account is the right side assigned to them in the holy place, and to as many as have suffered for the name of the Lord, but to the rest the left side is assigned. But the same gifts, the same promises are given to both, even to those who are seated on the right, and those who are seated on the left side. Only the former sit on the right hand, and have a certain glory beyond the others. Now thou art desirous to sit on the right hand together with them, but thy failings are many. Yet thou shalt be purified from thy failings, and all they who doubt not, shall be purified from all the sins they have committed even unto this day." When she had said these things she would have departed, but falling at her feet I besought her, by the Lord, to show me the vision that she had promised. But she again took me by the hand, and raised me up, and seated me on the seat at her left side, but she herself sat down

on the right side. And having lifted up a certain shining rod, she said unto me, "Seest thou a great thing?" I say unto her, "Lady, I see nothing." She said unto me, "Lo, dost thou not see in front of thee a great tower being built upon the waters, built of square shining stones?" Now this tower was being builded in a square by the six young men who came with her. And thousands of men were bringing in stones, some from the abyss, others from the earth, and giving them to the six young men, but these were taking them and building with them. But all the stones that were dragged out of the abyss they placed in the building just as they were, for they fitted together, and corresponded in their joining with the other stones. And they were so closely united with each other that they had no visible joint, so that the tower appeared as though it were built out of a single stone. But as for the other stones that were brought from the dry land, some of them they were throwing away, and some they were using in building, and others they were heaving and throwing far from the tower. And a multitude of other stones lay in a circle round the tower, which they did not use for the building. For some of them were scurfy, and some were split, and some were broken short, and some were white and round, and did not fit into the building. And I saw other stones cast far from the tower, and coming into the road, and not remaining in the road, but rolling out of the road into the place where there

was no road ; and others falling into the fire and burning, and others rolling near the water, and yet not able to roll into the water, although they would, if they could, have rolled and come unto the water.

### III.

And when she had shown me these things she would have departed. But I said unto her, "Lady, of what use is it for me to have seen these things if I do not know what they mean?" And she answered, and said unto me, "Thou art crafty, O man, in wishing to know the things concerning the tower." "Nay," I say unto her, "O Lady, it is that I may announce them unto my brethren, and that they, by hearing, may know the Lord and glorify Him greatly." And she said unto me, "Many shall hear, and when they have heard, some shall rejoice, and others shall weep ; but even these latter, if they repent when they hear, shall themselves rejoice. Harken now unto the parable of the tower. For I will reveal all things unto thee, and do thou no longer trouble me concerning the revelation, for these revelations have an end, for they have been fulfilled. But thou, for thou art shameless, wilt not cease from asking for revelations. The tower that thou seest being built is myself, even the Church, who appeared unto thee, both now and aforetime. Ask, therefore, what thou wilt concerning the tower, and I will reveal it unto thee, that thou mayest rejoice together with the saints?" I say unto her,

"Lady, since thou hast once thought me worthy of having all these things revealed unto me, reveal them." But she saith unto me, "Whatever it is possible should be revealed unto thee, shall be revealed. Only let thy heart be set towards God, and doubt not what thou seest." Then I asked her, "Why, O Lady, is this tower built upon the waters?" "I told thee before that thou art crafty," she said, "and thou inquirest diligently. By inquiring, therefore, shalt thou find the truth. Hearken, therefore, why the tower has been built upon the waters. It is because your life hath been saved, and shall be saved, by water. But the tower hath been founded by the word of the all-powerful and glorious name. And it is made fast by the invisible power of the Master."

#### IV.

And I answered, and said unto her, "Lady, this matter is great and wonderful ; but who are the six young men who are building?" And she said, "These are the holy angels of God who were first created, to whom the Lord hath given over the whole of His creation, to the end that they should increase and build up, and rule over all His creation. By these, therefore, will the building of the tower be finished." "But who are the others who are bringing up the stones?" "They, too, are the holy angels of God, and these six are superior over them. When, therefore, the building



of the tower shall be accomplished, they shall all rejoice together around the tower, and glorify God because the building of the tower hath been finished." Then I asked her, saying, "Lady, I wished to know what became of the stones, and also their meaning, what it is." And she answered, and said unto me, "It is not that thou art worthy above all others that these things should be revealed unto thee, for there are others who are before thee, and better than thou, to whom these visions ought to have been revealed, but in order that the name of God should be glorified they have been revealed unto thee, and shall yet be revealed for the sake of the double-minded, even those who doubt in their hearts whether these things shall be or no. Tell them that all these things are true, and that none of them is apart from the truth, but that they are all strong and sure, and well founded."

V.

"Hearken now concerning the stones that go to make the building; the stones that are square and white, and whose joinings fit one to another, are the apostles, and bishops, and teachers, and deacons who have walked in godliness and gravity, and who have, with purity and gravity, acted as bishops, teachers, and deacons to the elect of God, some of whom have fallen asleep, but some are still alive, and they have always agreed, and had peace among themselves, and have hearkened to each other; on this

account, do their joinings fit in the building." "But who are they that are being dragged out of the abyss and placed in the building, and whose joinings fit with those of the other stones, that have been already built in?" "These are they who have suffered for the name of the Lord." "But I wish to know, lady, what the other stones that are being brought from the dry land represent." She replied, "Those that go into the building, and that are not smoothed in the quarry, are those whom the Lord hath approved, because they walked in the straight paths of the Lord, and kept His commandments aright." "But who are they who are being brought and placed in the building?" "These are they who are young in the faith, and faithful. They are exhorted by the angels to do good, because no wickedness hath been found in them." "But those whom they have thrown away, and cast aside, who are they?" "These are they who have sinned, and who wish to repent; on this account, they have not been cast far outside the tower, because they will be useful for the building, if they shall repent. They, therefore, who are about to repent, if they shall repent, shall be strong in the faith, that is, if they shall repent now, while the tower is being built; but when the tower is finished they will no longer have place for repentance, but will be cast away. But this alone will they have, that they lie beside the tower."

## VI.

“But dost thou wish to know who those are that are hewn in pieces, and cast afar from the tower? These are the sons of iniquity. They believed in hypocrisy, and no wickedness was absent from them; on this account, they obtain not salvation, because, through their wickedness, they are not useful for building. On this account are they hewn in pieces and cast afar off, through the anger of the Lord, because they provoked Him; but the others whom thou seest, even the many who are lying on the ground, and not going in to the building, these are of two kinds—one, those that are rough, are they who had known the truth, and who abide not in it, nor cleave to the saints; on this account are they useless.” “But who are they that have rents?” “These are such as are at variance in their hearts against each other, and are not at peace among themselves, who in their faces have peace, but when they separate from one another, wickedness abides in their hearts. These, therefore, are the rents in the stones. But those that are broken short, are they that have believed indeed, and for the most part abide in righteousness, but they have a certain portion in iniquity; on this account are they broken short, and are not whole.” “But who are they, Lady, who are white and round, and fit not into the building?” And she answered and said unto me, “How long wilt thou be foolish and unwise, and

how long wilt thou ask all things and understand nothing? These are they who have faith, but who have also the wealth of this world, and when affliction ariseth through wealth and the cares of business, they deny their Lord." And I answered and said unto her, "Lady, when will they be useful for the building?" "When," she replied, "the wealth that leadeth their souls astray be cut off from them, then shall they be useful to God. For as the round stone, unless it be hewn, and lose something of itself, cannot become square; so they who are rich in this world, unless their wealth be cut off from them, cannot be useful to the Lord. Know this first from thyself; when thou wert wealthy thou wert useless, but now thou art useful and beneficial for purposes of life. Be ye therefore useful unto God, for thou also shalt be used from among the same stones."

## VII.

"But the other stones that thou sawest cast afar from the tower, and falling into the road, and rolling from the road into the pathless place; these are they who have believed indeed, but from double mindedness leave their true path. Thinking therefore that they can find a better path they err, and, wandering about in the desert, suffer misery. But they who are falling into the fire and burning, are they who, at the last, revolt from the living God, and no longer doth repentance come into their hearts, owing to the lust of lasciviousness, and the

evil deeds which they have wrought. But as for the others who are falling near the waters, and who are not able to roll to the water, dost thou desire to know who they are? These are they who hearken unto the word, and are willing to be baptized in the name of the Lord, but when they reflect on the purity which the truth requireth, they change their minds, and follow again after their evil desires." Thus she finished her explanation of the tower. But I still shamelessly asked her, "Tell me concerning all the stones that are cast away, and that fit not into the building of the tower; will there be repentance for them, and will they have a place in this tower?" "They have," she replied, "opportunity of repentance, but into this tower they cannot be fitted, but they shall fit into another place that is much smaller, when they have been tormented, and have fulfilled the days of their sins; and, on this account, shall they be changed, even because they partook of the word of righteousness, and then shall they be removed out of these tortures, when it hath come into their heart to repent of the evil deeds that they have done; but if it enter not into their hearts to repent of them, owing to their hardness of heart, they are not saved."

#### VIII.

When, therefore, I had made an end of asking her concerning all these things, she saith unto me, "Dost thou wish to see something else?" And I,

being eager to behold, was greatly delighted at the notion of seeing, and she looked at me; and smiled slightly, and said unto me, "Dost thou see seven women round the tower." "I see them," I replied, "O Lady!" "This tower is supported by them, according to the commandment of the Lord. Harken now to an account of their powers. The first of them that is clasping her hands is called Faith; by means of her are the elect of God saved. But she who hath her clothes girt round, and is of manly appearance, is called Temperance; whoever shall follow her is blessed in his life, because he shall abstain from all evil deeds, believing that, if he shall abstain from all evil desire, he shall inherit eternal life." "But who are the others," I said, "O Lady?" She replied, "They are the daughters of each other, and they are called, the one Simplicity, one Innocence, one Gravity, one Knowledge, one Love. When therefore thou shalt do all the works of their Master, thou shalt be able to live." "I should be glad to know," said I, "O Lady, what power each of them hath." "Listen," said she, "to the powers each of them hath. Their powers are governed by each other, and follow each other in the order of birth. For from Faith is born Temperance; and from Temperance, Simplicity; and from Simplicity, Innocence; and from Innocence, Gravity; and from Gravity, Knowledge; and from Knowledge, Love. The works of these, therefore, are pure, and grave, and divine. Whoever therefore shall serve

these, and shall prevail to lay hold of their deeds, shall have his habitation in the tower together with the saints of God." And I asked her concerning the times; if the end be already come. But she cried with a loud voice, "O foolish man, dost thou not see that the tower is still being built? When the building of the tower is finished, then cometh the end; but the building will quickly be finished. Let this reminder, and the refreshing of your spirits, be sufficient for thee and for the saints. But these things have not been revealed unto thee for thyself alone, but that thou shouldst make them known unto all; but after three days, for to this thou must give heed, I command thee to say into the ears of the saints these words which I am about to say unto thee, that by hearing and doing them, they, and thou together with them, may be cleansed from your sins."

## IX.

"Hearken unto me, ye children. I have brought you up in great simplicity, and innocence, and gravity, through the mercy of the Lord, who hath shed righteousness upon you, that ye might be justified and sanctified from all wickedness and iniquity, but ye are not willing to cease from your wickedness. Hearken, therefore, unto me, and be at peace among yourselves, and consider each other, and help each other, and do not partake of the creatures of God for your own enjoyment only, but give a share also to those who are in want.

For the rich, from the abundance of food, bring weakness upon their flesh and injure their flesh ; but the flesh of those who have not food is injured through their not having sufficiency of nourishment, and their bodily strength perisheth. This intemperance is harmful unto those who have, but impart not unto those in want. Beware, then, of the judgment that is coming upon you. Do ye who are of high degree seek out the hungry while the tower is as yet unfinished. For after that the tower hath been finished, ye shall seek to do good and shall find no place. Take heed, therefore, all ye who glory in your wealth, lest the needy should groan, and their groaning should come up to the Lord, and ye be shut out together with your goods from the gate of the tower. I speak, therefore, unto you, the leaders and presidents of the Church, be ye not like unto sorcerers ; for the sorcerers carry their drugs in boxes, but ye carry your drug and your poison in your hearts ; ye are hardened and will not cleanse your hearts, nor unite your minds in purity of Spirit, so that ye might obtain mercy from the Great King. Beware, therefore, my children, lest these your divisions rob you of your life. How can ye teach the elect of God if ye have no education yourselves ? Teach ye, therefore, one another, and be at peace among yourselves, so that when I stand before the Father, I may give an account of you all with joy unto your Lord."



## X.

When, therefore, she had finished speaking with me, the seven young men who had been building came, and bore her away into the tower, and four of them took up the seat, and bore it also away to the tower. The faces of them I did not see, because they were turned away, and as she departed, I asked her concerning the three forms, under which she had appeared unto me. She answered and said unto me, "Concerning these things it behoveth thee to ask another, that they may be revealed unto thee." Now, she had appeared unto me in the first vision, in the previous year, as an exceedingly old woman seated on a chair; in the second vision her appearance was more youthful, but her flesh and her hair were those of an old woman, and she spake unto me standing, and she was more joyous than before; but in the third vision she was quite younger, and radiant with beauty, only her hair was that of an aged woman; and she was joyous at the last, and seated upon a chair. I was, therefore, anxious above measure to know the meaning of this revelation. Then I beheld the old woman in a vision of the night, saying unto me, "All asking requireth humility; fast, therefore, and thou shalt receive from the Lord that which thou askest."

I fasted, therefore, during one day, and on that very night there appeared unto me a young man,

who said unto me, "Why dost thou continually ask in thy prayer for visions? Beware, lest by asking for many things, thou shouldst injure thy flesh. Sufficient for thee are these visions. Thinkest thou that thou canst bear to see stranger visions than those that thou hast seen?" I answered and said unto him, "I ask this alone, to be instructed concerning the three forms of the old woman, that the vision may be complete." And he answered and said unto me, "How long will ye be foolish? But it is your double-mindedness that maketh you foolish, and it is because your heart is not set towards the Lord." And I answered and said unto him again, "But from thee, my master, shall I learn these things more accurately."

## XI.

"Listen," he said, "about the three forms concerning which thou art asking. Why, in the first vision, did she appear unto thee an old woman seated upon a chair? Because your spirit is already old and worn out, and hath no power, owing to your infirmities and doubts. For just as the old, who have no longer any hope of growing young again, expect nothing except their rest; so ye, having been rendered weak by the affairs of this world, have given yourselves over unto torpor, and have not cast your cares upon the Lord; but your spirit hath been broken, and ye have grown old with grief." "I wish to know, O master!" I said, "why she is

seated on the chair?" "It is because every sick man is seated on a chair, owing to his infirmity, to the end that the weakness of his body may be sustained. Thou hast now an explanation of the form of the first vision."

## XII.

"But in the second vision thou sawest her standing, and younger in form and more joyous than before, but her flesh and hair were those of an old woman. Listen," he said, "to this parable also. Suppose the case of an old man who has already lost all hope concerning himself, owing to his weakness and poverty, and is expecting nothing but the last day of his life. Suddenly an inheritance is left to him. He heareth the news, riseth up, and being overjoyed, putteth on strength; and no longer is prostrate, but standeth on his feet; his spirit, which was already worn out by his former deeds, is renewed, and he sitteth still no longer, but playeth the man. So ye also fared, when ye heard the revelation which the Lord hath given you, because He hath had compassion on you, and hath renewed your spirit. Ye laid aside your infirmities, and there came unto you strength; and ye became strong in the faith, and the Lord rejoiced when he beheld your revival, and hath showed you the building of the tower. And other things than these will He show you, if ye with your whole heart keep peace among yourselves."

## XIII.

“But in the third vision thou sawest her young, and fair, and joyous, and lovely of form ; for as when good news have come to any one in grief, straightway he forgetteth his former griefs, and no longer attendeth to anything except the good news which he hath heard, and his spirit is renewed through the joy that he hath received. Thus ye also have received a renewal of your spirit through beholding these good things. And thou sawest her seated on a chair, because her position is a strong one, for a chair hath four legs, and standeth firmly. The world too is held together by four elements. They, therefore, who have repented thoroughly shall renew their youth, and shall be firmly established, even they who have repented with all their heart. Thou hast now completely the whole revelation. Ask me no more concerning the revelation ; but if anything is wanting, it shall be revealed unto thee.”



## The Fourth Vision.

*Concerning the Coming Tribulation.*

### I.

THE vision that I saw, brethren, twenty days after the former vision, was intended for a type of the coming tribulation. I was going to a villa by the Campanian road, and from the public road to the villa is, as it were, ten stadia, and the place is easily traversed; and as I walked by myself I besought the Lord to fulfil, by means of His holy Church, the visions and revelations which He had showed me; that He might make me strong, and give repentance to all His servants who have gone astray, that His great and glorious name might be glorified, because He had thought me worthy of having shown unto me His wonders. And as I glorified Him, and gave thanks unto Him, there came, as it were, the sound of a voice, answering me, and saying, "Doubt not, O Hermas;" and I began to reason within myself and to say, "What reason have I to doubt, when I have been thus firmly

assured by the Lord, and have seen glorious things?" And I went a little further, and behold! I saw dust rising, as it were, to heaven, and I began to say within myself, "Are cattle coming and raising a dust?" and it was distant from me about a stadium; and as the dust became greater and greater, I suspected that it was some Divine manifestation. Then there shone out a glimpse of sun, and, lo, I beheld a vast monster like to a whale, and from its mouth issued fiery locusts, and it was in size, as it were, an hundred feet long, and it had a head like an earthen vessel. And I began to weep, and to ask the Lord to deliver me from it. And I remembered the word which I had heard spoken, "Doubt not, O Hermas." Having, therefore, brethren, clothed myself with faith in the Lord, and having remembered the great things that He had taught me, I boldly gave myself up unto the beast. It came on with such a rushing noise, that it could evidently have destroyed the city. I came near to it, and the huge reptile stretched itself on the ground, and did nothing but put out its tongue, and did not move at all until I had passed by it; and the beast had upon its head four colours—first, black; next, the colour of blood and fire; then the colour of gold; lastly, white.

## II.

But after that I had passed the beast, and had advanced, as it were, about thirty feet, behold! there met me a virgin, adorned as though for going from

the bridal chamber, being completely clad in white, and having white sandals on her feet, and she was veiled up to the forehead, and her head was covered by a cap. I knew from my former visions that she was the Church, and I became more joyous. She saluted me, saying, "Hail, O man!" and I saluted her in return, saying, "Lady, hail." And she answered and said unto me, "Has there nothing met thee?" And I answered and said unto her, "Yea, Lady, a monster, large enough to destroy whole nations, met me; but by the power of the Lord, and by His mercy, I escaped it." "Well hast thou escaped it," she said; "because thou hast cast thy care upon God, and hast opened thine heart unto the Lord, having believed that thou canst be saved by nothing but His great and glorious name. On this account the Lord hath sent His angel, whose name is Thegri, who hath power over the reptiles, and he hath stopped the mouth of the beast, so that he should not hurt thee. Thou hast through thy faith avoided great affliction, and because, when thou sawedst so vast a monster, thou didst not doubt. Depart, therefore, and tell to the elect of the Lord His mighty deeds, and tell them that this beast is a type of the great tribulation coming. If, therefore, ye prepare beforehand, and repent with your whole heart before the Lord, ye shall be able to escape it, if your heart be pure and blameless; and if, during the rest of the days of your life, ye shall serve the Lord without blame, casting all your cares upon the Lord, for He shall guide them aright. Believe

in the Lord, ye doubters, for He hath power over all things, even to turn away His wrath from you, and to send plagues upon you who doubt. Woe unto them who hear these words, and do not obey them; better had it been for them that they had never been born."

### III.

And I asked her concerning the four colours which the beast had upon its head, and she answered, and said unto me, "Thou art again curious about these matters." I say unto her, "Yea, Lady, make known unto me what these things mean." "Hearken," said she, "the black is this world in which we dwell; but that part which is fiery, and of the colour of blood, sheweth that it is necessary that this world should be destroyed by blood and fire; but the golden part representeth you who have escaped this world; for even as the gold is tried in the fire and becometh useful, so ye who dwell in it are tried. Ye, therefore, who abide steadfast, and who are tried by it, as it were, in the fire, shall be purified. For even as the gold casteth away its dross, so ye shall cast aside all grief and tribulation, and ye shall be purified and be useful for the building of the tower. But the white part is the world to come, in which shall dwell the elect of God, because they who are chosen by God for eternal life shall be spotless and pure. But do thou not give over speaking



into the ears of the saints. Ye have also the type of the great tribulation coming; but if ye will act aright, it shall be nothing. Remember, therefore, the things that have been written beforehand." When she had said these things she departed, and I saw not to what place she went; for there arose a noise, and I turned back in fear, thinking that the beast was coming.

## The Fifth Vision.

*Concerning the Appearing of the Shepherd.*

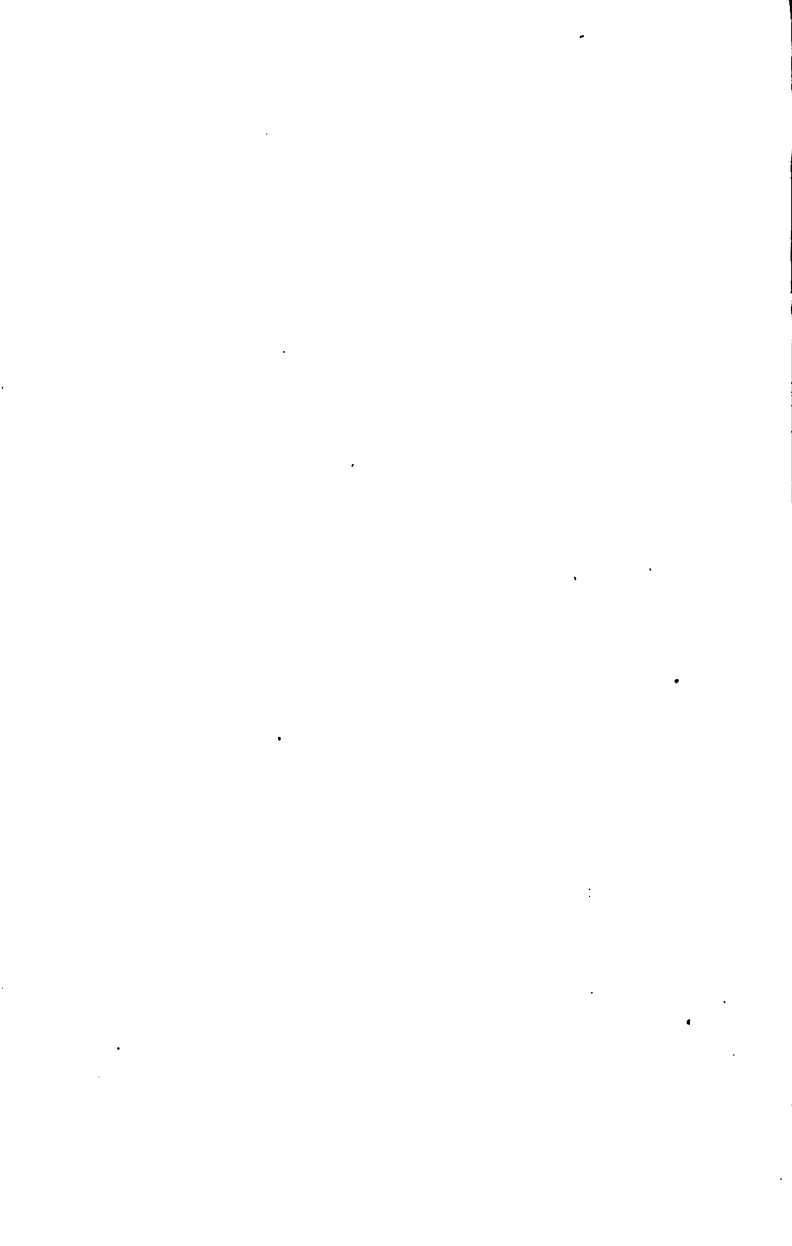
### I.

AND as I prayed in my house, and sat upon the couch, there entered a certain man, glorious in appearance, habited as a shepherd, clad in a white goat skin, and having a scrip upon his shoulders and a staff in his hand. And he saluted me, and I saluted him in return, and straightway he sate beside me, and said unto me, "I have been sent by the most holy angel that I might dwell with thee during the rest of the days of thy life." Now, I thought that he had come to tempt me, and said unto him, "Who art thou? for I know to whom I have been entrusted." He said unto me, "Dost thou not know?" I say unto him, "No." "I am the shepherd," he said, "to whom thou hast been entrusted. While he was yet speaking his form was altered, and I knew that it was he to whom I had been entrusted. And

straightway I was confounded, and fear seized upon me, and I was altogether overwhelmed with grief, because I had answered him wickedly and foolishly. But he answered, and said unto me, "Be not confounded, but make thyself strong in my commandments which I am about to command thee. For I was sent, he said, that I might show again unto thee all the things that thou hadst seen before, particularly those that are useful unto you. First of all, write my commandments and similitudes; and the other things thou shalt write as I shall show them unto thee. On this account he saith, I command thee first to write the commandments and similitudes, that thou mayest read them with ease, and mayest be able to keep them." I wrote therefore the commandments and similitudes as he commanded me. "If, therefore, after that ye have heard them, ye shall keep them, and shall walk in them with a pure heart, ye shall receive from the Lord the things that He hath promised you. But if, when ye have heard, ye shall not repent, but shall add unto your sins, ye shall receive from the Lord the opposite." All these things did the shepherd, who is the angel of repentance, command me thus to write.

**Book Second.**

**THE COMMANDMENTS.**



## The First Commandment.

*On Believing in God.*

“**F**IRST of all believe that there is one God, even He who created and framed all things, and made all things out of that which is not, and comprehendeth all things, being alone incomprehensible. Believe, therefore, in Him, and fear Him, and fearing Him be sober. Keep, therefore, these things, and thou shalt cast away all wickedness from thyself, and thou shalt put on the whole virtue of justice, and shalt live unto God, if thou shalt keep this commandment.”

## **The Second Commandment.**

*On Avoiding Evil-Speaking, and on Alms-Giving.*

**H**E saith unto me, "Hold fast to simplicity and be innocent, and thou shalt be as the babes that know not the wickedness that destroyeth the life of men. In the first place speak evil of no man, nor listen with pleasure to a slanderer; otherwise thou that hearest shall be guilty of the sin of the slanderer, if thou believe the slander which thou hearest, for if thou believe it, thou thyself wilt have somewhat against thy brother. Thus thou wilt be guilty of the sin of the slanderer. Slander is evil, it is an unruly devil, never keeping at peace, but always having its habitation in variance. Abstain, therefore, from it, and thou shalt have prosperity with all men. But put on the holiness in which there is no cause of offence, but all its works are smooth and joyous. Do good, and from thy toils which God giveth thee, give with simplicity to all that are in need, not doubting to whom thou shouldst give, and to

whom thou shouldst not give. Give unto all; for God willeth that things should be given to all men from His own gifts.

“They, therefore, who receive His gifts will have to give an account unto God for what reason they received them, and to what purpose they have put them. They who receive in affliction shall not be condemned; but they who receive in hypocrisy shall pay the penalty. He then who giveth is guiltless. For as he received from the Lord the ministry to fulfil, so he fulfilled it in simplicity, not doubting to whom he should give or not give. This ministry then, when fulfilled with simplicity, is glorious before the Lord. He, therefore, who thus ministereth with simplicity shall live to God. Therefore keep the commandments as I have spoken unto thee, that thou and thy house may be found to repent with simplicity, and that thy heart may be pure and undefiled.



## The Third Commandment.

### *On the Love of Truth.*

**A** GAIN he said unto me, "Love truth, and let nothing but truth proceed out of thy mouth. So that the spirit which God hath fixed in this flesh may be found true among all men; and thus the Lord who dwelleth in thee shall be glorified. Because the Lord is true in all His words, and in Him there is no lie. They, therefore, who lie set at nought the Lord, and are robbers of the Lord, not delivering up to Him the deposit which they received, for they received from Him a spirit free from lies. If they shall return that to Him made false, they have polluted the commandment of the Lord, and have become robbers."

Now, when I heard these things I wept sore, and when he saw me weeping, he said, "Why weepest thou?" "Because, Master," I replied, "I know not whether I can be saved." "Wherefore?" he said. "Never in my life, O Master," I replied, "have I spoken a true word, but I have always spoken

craftily with all men, and I have exhibited my lies as truth among all men. And never did any one contradict me, but my word was believed. How then, Master, I said, can I live after having done these things?" "True and right is thine opinion," he said, "for it behoved thee as a servant of God to walk in the truth; nor should an evil conscience dwell with the spirit of truth, or bring grief on the spirit of truth and holiness." "Never," I reply, "did I hear clearly words such as these." "Now that you hear," he said, "keep them, in order that even the former falsehoods which thou spakest in thy business may become trustworthy, now that these things have been found to be true. For even thy former sayings may become trustworthy; if thou keep these things, and from this time forth speak nothing but truth. Then shalt thou be able to purchase life for thyself; and whoever shall hear this commandment, and abstain from the abominable wickedness of lying, shall live before God.

## The Fourth Commandment.

### *On Chastity.*

#### I

“**I** CHARGE thee,” he said, “to observe purity ; and let no thought for another man’s wife enter into thine heart, nor concerning any impurity, nor concerning any such like wickedness ; for, by doing this, thou committest a great sin. By ever remembering thine own wife thou wilt avoid this sin. For if this desire come into thine heart thou wilt sin, and if thou desire in like manner other evil things thou workest sin. For this desire is great sin for a servant of God. But if any one do this evil deed, he worketh death for himself. Beware, therefore, and abstain from this desire. For where holiness dwelleth, there sin ought not to ascend to the heart of a just man.” “I said unto him, Master, suffer me to ask thee a few things.” He answered me, “Say on.” “I said unto him, Master, if a man have a wife that believeth in the Lord, and he find her in adultery,

doth the man sin if he continue to live with her?" "So long as he is ignorant," he replied, "he doth not sin. But if her husband know of her sin, and the wife repent not, but abide in her iniquity, and her husband live with her, he is guilty of the sin, and a sharer in her adultery." "What then," said I, "O Master, shall the husband do if his wife abide in this case?" "Let him put her away," he said, "and let the husband remain by himself; but if, after he hath put away his wife, he marry another, he committeth adultery himself." "If, therefore, after he hath put away his wife, she repent, and wish to return to her husband, shall not she be received?" "Yea, verily," he replied; "if, therefore, her husband receive her not, he sinneth and bringeth great sin upon himself, but the sinner that hath repented must be received, but not if she sin frequently, for there is but one repentance for the servants of God. But on account of her repentance her husband ought not to marry again. This is the case both with the man and the woman. Not only," he says, "is it adultery if any one pollute his flesh, but whosoever doeth things like unto the Gentiles committeth adultery; so that if a man abide in such actions as these, and repent not, keep thyself from him, and live not with him, otherwise thou art also a partaker of his sin. On this account, therefore, hath the commandment been given, that whether the man or the woman have sinned, ye should remain by yourselves, for in such cases there may be repentance. I there-

fore," he said, "offer no opportunity that this deed should be committed, but merely that the sinner should sin no more. But concerning his former sin, there is One that is able to give a remedy, it is He that hath authority over all things."

## II.

I asked him again, saying, "Since the Lord hath thought me worthy that thou shouldst always dwell with me, bear with yet a few more words from me, since I understand nothing; but my heart is hardened from my former deeds; make me to understand, for I am very foolish, and altogether know nothing." He therefore answered and said unto me, "I am set to preside over repentance, and I give understanding to all who repent. Seemeth it not unto thee," he said, "that the very act of repentance is wisdom; yea, repentance is great wisdom. For he who hath sinned understandeth that he hath wrought evil before the Lord, and the deed that he hath done cometh into his heart, and he repenteth, and no longer worketh evil, but he doeth good lavishly, and humbleth his own soul, and tormenteth it, because he hath sinned. Thou seest, therefore, that repentance is great wisdom." "It is on this account," I reply, "O Master, that I inquire all things accurately from thee. In the first place, because I am a sinner, that I may know what works I may do and live, because my sins are many and various." "Thou shalt live," he says, "if thou keep my command-

ments and walkest in them, and whosoever heareth and keepeth these commandments shall live before God."

### III.

"Still further, Master," said I, "I will go on to inquire of thee." "Speak on," he replied. "I have heard," I said, "from certain teachers that there is no repentance beside that which took place when we went into the water of baptism, and received remission of our former sins." He saith unto me, "Thou hast heard rightly; for so it is, for he who hath received remission of sins must sin no longer, but abide in purity. But since thou seekest to know all things exactly, I will show this unto thee likewise, so as to give no opportunity of offence to those who are about to believe, or who have believed, in the Lord. For they who now have believed, or are about to believe, are no longer in a state of repentance, but have the remission of their former sins. The Lord therefore hath granted repentance to those who have been called before these latter days. For the Lord being an understander of hearts, and knowing all things beforehand, knew the weakness of man, and the craft of the devil, that he would do some evil to the servants of God, and would act wickedly towards them. The Lord therefore, being full of compassion, hath had mercy upon His work, and hath appointed this opportunity of repentance, and the authority over this repentance hath been given unto me. But I tell

thee," he said, "after this great and holy calling, if any one go astray, being tempted by the devil, he hath one opportunity of repentance. But if he sin frequently and repent, repentance is unprofitable to this man, for with difficulty will he live." I say unto him, "I have come to life again from hearing these things accurately from thee, for I know that I shall be saved if I no longer add unto my sins." "Thou shalt be saved," he said, "and all, even as many as shall do these things."

#### IV.

I answered again and said unto him, "Master, since thou hast once borne with me, tell me this thing likewise." "Say on," he replied. "If a wife or a husband die," I say, "and the survivor marry again, doth he who marrieth sin?" "No, he sinneth not," he said. "But if he remain by himself he hath more exceeding honour, and gaineth great glory before the Lord. But if he marry he sinneth not. Observe, therefore, purity and holiness, and thou shalt live unto God. Observe from this day forth, on which thou wast given unto me, the things that I say unto thee, and the things that I am about to say, and I will dwell in thine house. But there shall be forgiveness for thy former sins if thou shalt keep my commandments, and there shall be forgiveness for all, if they shall keep these commandments, and walk in this purity."

## The Fifth Commandment.

### *On Anger.*

#### I.

“**B**E thou long-suffering and prudent,” he said, “and thou shalt have the mastery over all evil deeds, and shalt work all righteousness. For if thou shalt be long-suffering, the Holy Spirit that dwelleth in thee shall be pure, not being darkened by any other evil spirit; but dwelling at large, shall rejoice and be gladdened together with the vessel in which it dwelleth. Then it shall serve God in gladness, having happiness in itself.

“But if any angry temper approacheth, straightway the Holy Spirit, being delicate, is straitened, not having its dwelling-place clear, and seeketh to depart out of the place. For it is choked by the evil spirit, not being able to serve the Lord as it wisheth, being polluted by evil temper. For the Lord abideth in long-suffering, but the devil abideth in wrath. That both these spirits should dwell together is inexpedient, and evil for that man in whom



they dwell. For if thou take a small quantity of wormwood and pour it into a jar of honey, doth not all the honey become changed, and a very little bitterness destroy the sweetness of the honey, and it no longer hath the same favour with the master when it hath been mixed and hath lost its use? But if the wormwood be not cast into the honey, the honey is found sweet, and is useful to its master. Thou seest, therefore, that patience is sweeter than honey, and useful to God, and the Lord dwelleth in it. But evil temper is bitter and useless. If, therefore, evil temper be mixed with patience, patience is defiled, and its intercession is not useful before God." "I should be glad," I said, "Master, to know the working of evil temper, that I may guard myself against it." "And of a truth," he said, "unless thou guardest thyself and thy house from it, thou hast destroyed all thine hope. But guard thyself from it, for I am with thee. And all men shall abstain from it, even as many as repent with all their heart. For I shall be with them, and shall preserve them. For they have all been justified by the most holy angel."

## II.

"Listen," said he, "to the working of anger, how evil it is, and how it subverteth the servants of God by its working, and causeth them to wander from righteousness. But it doth not turn out of the way those who are fully established in the faith; nor can it

work on them, because the power of the Lord is with them ; but such as are empty and double-minded it causeth to wander. For when it beholdeth such persons in tranquillity, it insinuateth itself into the heart of the man ; and the man or the woman falleth into bitterness for a mere nothing on account of worldly affairs, either about food, or about some slight, or about some friend, or about giving or receiving, or about some such folly, for all these things are foolish and empty, and inexpedient for the servants of God. But patience is great and hath a strong power, and is mighty ; yea, it flourisheth in great prosperity ; it is joyous, exulting, free from care, glorifying the Lord on all occasions, having no bitterness in itself, abiding for ever gentle and quiet. This patience dwelleth with them that have perfect faith. But anger is first foolish, light, and senseless. Then from folly ariseth bitterness, and from bitterness anger, and from anger wrath, and from wrath revenge ; then revenge, arising from a combination of so many evils, becometh great and incurable sin. For when these spirits dwell in one vessel, where also the Holy Spirit dwelleth, the vessel cannot contain them, but runneth over. The delicate spirit, therefore, not being accustomed to dwell with the evil spirit, nor with bitterness, departeth from that man, and seeketh to dwell with meekness and quiet. Then when it departeth from that man where it was dwelling, the man becometh emptied of the just spirit, and for the future is disorderly in all his actions, and is filled with evil spirits, being torn in this way and

that by evil spirits, and is altogether blinded to the spirit of goodness. Thus it happeneth to all persons of violent temper. Keep thyself, therefore, from violent temper, which is the most evil spirit. Put on patience, and resist violent temper and bitterness, and thou shalt be found in possession of the holiness that is beloved by the Lord. Beware, therefore, lest thou neglect this commandment. For if thou shalt be careful of this commandment, thou shalt be able to keep the rest of the commandments which I am about to command thee. Be mighty, therefore, in them, and be strong in them, and let all grow strong in them, even as many as are willing to walk in them."

## The Sixth Commandment.

*On the two Angels attendant on Man.*

### I.

“**I** CHARGED thee,” he said, “in the first commandment to preserve faith, and fear, and temperance.” “Yea, master,” I reply. “And now I wish,” he proceeded, “to show thee their powers also, that thou mayest know what power and energy each of them hath, for their energies are twofold. Now they are concerned with the just and the unjust. Do thou, therefore, believe in the just, and not believe in the unjust. For that which is just hath a straight path, but that which is unjust a crooked one. But do thou go on by the straight and smooth path, and avoid the crooked, for the crooked way hath no tracks, but it hath wildernesses and many stumbling-blocks, and is rough and thorny. It is therefore injurious to them that walk therein, but they that walk in the smooth road walk smoothly and without stumbling, for it is neither rough nor thorny. Thou seest, therefore, that it is more expedient to

walk in this way." "It pleaseth me," I said, "Master, to walk in this way." "Thou shalt walk in it," he said, "and whosoever shall turn unto the Lord with his whole heart, shall walk therein."

## II.

"Listen, therefore," he said, "concerning faith. There are two angels," said he, "among men, one of justice and the other of wickedness." "How then, said I, "shall I know their powers, for both of them dwell with me." Listen," said he, "and understand their powers. The angel of righteousness is delicate, and modest, and meek, and quiet. When, therefore, he cometh into thy heart, he speaketh with thee straightway concerning justice, concerning purity, concerning holiness, concerning contentment, concerning every good deed and every glorious virtue. When all these things have come into thine heart, know that the angel of righteousness is with thee. These, therefore, are the works of the angel of righteousness. Believe thou in him and in his works. Behold, therefore, also the works of the angel of wickedness. First of all, he is evil tempered, and bitter, and senseless, and his works are evil and overthrow the servants of God. When, they come up into thy heart, know him from his deeds." "How," I reply, "shall I know him? I understand not." "Listen," said he, "and be of understanding. When any evil temper or bitterness cometh upon thee, know that the angel of wickedness

is in thee. Then the desire for much doing cometh upon thee : for much expensive food, and intoxicating drink, and much revelling, and for various luxuries, and for things unnecessary, and the desire for women, and covetousness, and much pride and boasting, and as many things as are like and similar to these. When, therefore, these things come into thy heart, know that the angel of wickedness is in thee. Do thou, therefore, since thou hast known his works, depart from him, and put not thy trust in him, because his works are evil and inexpedient for the servants of God. Thou seest, therefore, the works of both the angels. Understand them, and put thy trust in the angel of righteousness. But depart from the angel of wickedness, because his teaching is evil in every way. For even though a man be most faithful, yet if the imagination of this angel come into his heart, that man or woman must needs commit some sin. And if, on the other hand, a man or woman be most wicked, and the works of the angel of righteousness ascend into his heart, he must of necessity do something good. Thou seest, therefore," he said, "that it is well to follow the angel of righteousness, and to depart from the angel of iniquity. This commandment sheweth the things concerning faith, that thou mayest believe the works of the angel of righteousness, and by doing them mayest live unto God ; but believe that the works of the angel of wickedness are evil, and by not doing them shalt thou live unto God.

## The Seventh Commandment.

### *On the Fear of God.*

“**F**EAR the Lord,” he saith, “and keep His commandments. By keeping the commandments of the Lord thou shalt be powerful in all thy deeds, and thy deeds will be beyond comparison. For by fearing the Lord thou wilt do all things well, and this is the fear with which thou must fear him and be saved. But fear not the devil ; for by fearing the Lord thou shalt overcome the devil, because there is no power in him. But he who hath no power needeth not to be feared ; but He whose power is glorious, there is fear of Him. For every one who hath power causeth fear ; but he who hath no power is despised of all men. But fear the works of the devil, because they are evil ; but if thou fearest the Lord thou shalt not do them, but shalt refrain from them. There are, therefore, two kinds of fear. If thou desirest not to do evil, fear the Lord and thou shalt not do it. If, again, thou desirest to do good, fear the Lord and thou shalt do good. So the fear of the Lord is strong, and great, and glorious,

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therefore fear the Lord and thou shalt live unto Him. And as many as fear Him, and keep His commandments shall live unto God." "Wherefore," said I, "didst thou say concerning those that keep His commandments, that they shall live unto God." "Because," he replied, "the whole creation feareth the Lord, but keepeth not His commandments. But the life of them that fear Him and keep his commandments is with God; but as for those that keep not His commandments there is no life in them."



## The Eighth Commandment.

*On the Avoidance of Evil and the Following of Good.*

“**I** SAID unto thee that the creatures of God are twofold, for temperance is also twofold. For with regard to some things it is right to be temperate, with regard to others not.” “Explain to me,” I said, “Master, as to what things it is right to be temperate, and as to what it is not right.” “Listen,” said he, “be temperate with regard to evil, and do it not; but be not temperate with regard to good, but do it. For if thou refrain from doing good thou committest a great sin; but if thou refrain from doing evil, thou workest great righteousness; refrain, therefore, from doing evil, and do that which is good.” “How many, O Master,” I say unto him, “are the sins from which it behoveth that we should refrain ourselves.” “Listen,” he said; “from adultery and fornication, from the lawlessness of drunkenness, from evil pride, from many meats, from the extravagance of wealth, from vanity, from pride, from vain-glory, from lies, from evil speaking and hypocrisy, from malice and all other blasphemy.

These deeds are the most evil of all in the life of man; from these deeds, therefore, the servant of God must refrain himself. For he who refraineth not himself from these things is not able to live unto God. "Listen now," he said, "to the things that resemble and follow these." "What," I said, "Master, are there still further evil deeds?" "Yea," he said, "there are many from which the servant of God must refrain himself: theft, lying, fraud, false-witness, covetousness, evil concupiscence, deceit, vain-glory, boasting, and as many things as are like unto these. Thinkest thou not that these things are evil? Yea, they are very evil for the servants of God. From all these things he who serveth God must refrain himself. Refrain thou therefore from all these things, that thou mayest live unto God, and mayest be enrolled among those who refrain from them. Now, the things from which it behoveth thee to refrain are these. Harken now unto the things that thou must not refrain from, but do. Refrain not from good, but do it." "But tell me," said I, "Master, the power of the things that are good, that I may walk in them and serve them, to the end that by doing them I may be able to be saved." "Listen," said he, "to those good works which thou must do and not refrain from. First of all faith, fear of the Lord, love, concord, the words of righteousness, truth, patience. There is nothing better than these in the life of man. If any one keep these, and refrain not from them, he is happy in his life. Then hearken to

the things that follow upon these. To assist the widows, to visit the orphans and the poor, to redeem the servants of God from their necessities, to be hospitable, for in hospitality is the doing of good, never to resist any one, to be quiet, to be poorer than all other men, to respect the aged, to practise justice, to guard the brotherhood, to endure insolence, to be long-suffering, to comfort those that are weary in spirit, not to cast away from the faith those that have stumbled, but to convert them and make them of good cheer, to rebuke those that sin, not to trouble debtors or the needy, and if there be any other things like unto these. Seemeth it unto thee," he saith, "that these things are good?" "What, Master," I said, "can be better than these?" "Walk thou in them," He said; "refrain not from them, and thou shalt live unto God. Keep, therefore, this commandment; if thou do what is good and refrain not from it thou shalt live unto God. Yea, all who act thus shall live unto God; and again, if thou do not evil, but refrain from it, thou shalt live unto God; and all shall live unto God if they keep these commandments and walk in them."

## The Ninth Commandment.

### *On Prayer.*

**H**E saith unto me, "Remove doubt from thyself, and doubt not to ask anything from God. Neither say within thyself, How can I ask and receive from the Lord after that I have committed so many sins against Him? Reason not thus with thyself, but turn unto the Lord with thy whole heart and ask from Him, nothing doubting, and thou shalt know His great compassion, that He will not abandon thee, but will fulfil the request of thy soul. For He is not as men who bear malice, but He himself is without malice and hath compassion on his work. Do thou, therefore, purify thy heart from all the vanities of this world, and from the words that have been before spoken unto thee, and thou shalt receive all things and shalt not miss any of thy requests, even whatsoever thou shalt ask of the Lord without doubting. But if thou doubt in thy heart thou shalt receive none of thy requests, for they who doubt with regard to God are double-minded, and obtain none of their requests at all. But they who are perfect in the faith ask for everything, trusting in the Lord, and receive, because they ask

in confidence, nothing doubting. For every double-minded man, if he repent not, shall hardly be saved. Cleanse, therefore, thy heart from doubt; put on faith, because it is strong, and trust in God, that thou shalt receive all the requests that thou makest. And if after thou hast asked any request of the Lord thou receive it more slowly, doubt not, because thou hast not quickly received the desire of thy soul. For it is altogether owing to some temptation or transgression, of which thou art ignorant, that thou receivest thy request more slowly. Cease not, therefore, to make the request of thy soul, and thou shalt receive it. But if thou grow weary and doubt in asking, accuse thyself and not him that giveth not unto thee. See now what doubt is. It is evil, and unwise, and uprooteth many from the faith; yea, though they be very strong. For doubt is the daughter of the devil, and worketh great wickedness towards the servants of God. 'Despise, therefore, doubt, and gain the mastery over it in everything; put on strong and powerful faith. For faith promiseth everything and performeth everything; but doubt, having no confidence in itself, faileth in all the works that it doeth. Thou seest, therefore," he saith, "that faith is from above, even from the Lord, and that it hath great power. But doubt is an earthly spirit from the devil, having no power. Do thou, therefore, serve faith that hath power; keep thyself from doubt that hath no power, and thou shalt live unto God; and all who are thus minded shall live unto God.

## The Tenth Commandment.

### *On Grief.*

#### I.

“TAKE from thyself,” He said, “grief, for it is the sister of doubt and ill-temper.” “How,” I reply, “Master, is it the sister of these? Ill-temper seemeth unto me to be one thing, and doubt another, and grief another.” “Thou art foolish, O man; perceivest thou not that grief is more evil than all the spirits, and is most dreadful to the servants of God; and, beyond all spirits, destroyeth man, and weareth out the Holy Spirit, and yet again saveth?” “I, O Master,” I reply, “am unlearned, and understand not these parables. For how it can wear out, and yet again save man, I know not.” “Listen,” said he. “They who have never inquired concerning the truth, nor sought out about godliness, but who have merely believed, being mixed up in business, and wealth, and worldly friendships, and in many other affairs of this world, as many as are occupied with these

things, understand not the parables of godliness. For they are darkened by these deeds, and are corrupted and become barren; even as good vineyards, when they meet with neglect, are made barren by thorns and weeds of all kinds; so these men, who, after they have believed, fall into these various actions before mentioned, lose their understanding, and altogether comprehend nothing. But they who have the fear of God, and inquire concerning godliness and truth, and have their hearts towards the Lord, more quickly understand and perceive all the things that are said unto them, because they have the fear of the Lord in themselves; for where the Lord dwelleth, there is also great understanding. Cleave therefore unto the Lord, and thou shalt understand and know all things."

## II.

"Listen, therefore," he said unto me, "O foolish man, how grief weareth out the Holy Spirit, and yet again saveth. When the doubter undertaketh any action and faileth, owing to his doubting, this grief entereth into a man, and he grieveth the Holy Spirit, and weareth it out. Then again, when bitterness of temper cleaveth unto a man concerning anything, and he becometh embittered, again grief entereth into the heart of the man who hath become embittered, and he grieveth at the deed that he hath done, and repenteth. His grief then seemeth to bring salvation, because he hath

repented after doing what was evil. Both these actions, therefore, grieve the Spirit. Doubt, on the one hand, because it hath not attained its object, but ill-temper grieveth the Spirit, because it hath wrought evil. Both these things, therefore, are grievous to the Holy Spirit, even doubt and ill-temper. Put away therefore grief from thyself, and harass not the Holy Spirit that dwelleth in thee, lest he pray unto God against thee, and depart from thee, for the Spirit of God that was given unto this flesh endureth neither grief nor oppression. Put on, therefore, gladness that hath always favour before God, and is acceptable unto Him, and delight thyself in it, for every man that is glad doeth the things that are good, and thinketh good thoughts, and despiseth grief. But the man of grief is always committing sin; in the first place, he committeth sin because he grieveth the Holy Spirit which was given unto man in gladness; in the second place, while grieving the Holy Spirit he worketh iniquity, because he neither prayeth nor giveth thanks unto the Lord; for the prayer of a man of grief never hath the power of ascending to the altar of God." "Wherefore," said I, "doth not the prayer of one who is grieved ascend to the altar?" "Because," he said, "grief hath settled upon his heart. Grief, therefore, being mingled with his prayer, doth not allow it to ascend pure unto the altar of God; for as wine and vinegar, when mixed together, give not the same pleasure, so grief, mixed with the



Holy Spirit, hath not the same power of prayer. Cleanse therefore thyself from this evil grief, and thou shalt live unto God ; and all shall live unto God, even as many as cast away grief from themselves, and put on all gladness."

## The Eleventh Commandment.

### *On True and False Prophets.*

**H**E showed unto me men sitting on a seat, and another man sitting upon a chair, and said unto me, "Seest thou these men sitting upon a seat?" "I see them," I reply, "O Master." "These men," he said, "are faithful, but he who sitteth on a chair is a false prophet who destroyeth the understanding of the servants of God. But he destroyeth the understanding of the doubters, not of the faithful. These doubters come unto him as to a prophet, and ask him what will happen to them; and the false prophet, though he hath in himself no power of the divine spirit, speaketh to them in answer to their questions, and, according to their evil lusts, and he satisfieth their souls even as they wish. For he, being empty himself, returneth empty answers to empty questions. For whatever he be asked, he answereth according to the emptiness of the man; but certain of his sayings are true; for the devil filleth him with his spirit, if perchance he can break any of the just. As many therefore

as are strong in the faith of the Lord, having put on truth, cleave not unto such spirits, but refrain from them ; but as many as are doubters, and frequently change their minds, use divination, even as the Gentiles do, and bring upon themselves greater sin by their idolatry. For he who consulteth a false prophet about any matter is an idolater, and empty of truth, and senseless. For every spirit that is given of God requireth not to be asked, but, having the power of godliness, speaketh all things of itself, because it is from above, even from the power of the Spirit of God ; but the spirit that is asked, and that speaketh according to the lusts of men, is earthly and light, and hath no power, and speaketh not at all, unless it hath been asked.” “How, then,” said I, “O Master, shall a man know which of them is a prophet, and which is a false prophet.” “Listen,” said he, “concerning both the prophets ; and even as I am about to tell unto thee, so shalt thou test the prophet and the false prophet. By his life do thou test the man who hath the Spirit of God. In the first place, he who hath the Spirit of God that cometh from above, is gentle and quiet and humble, and abstaineth from all wickedness, and from the vain desire of this world, and maketh himself the poorest of all men, and returneth no answer to any one when he is asked, nor speaketh alone ; nor doth the Holy Spirit speak when man wisheth him to speak ; but when God wisheth him to speak, then it speaketh. When, therefore, the man who hath the Spirit of God hath come into a synagogue of men who have faith in the Spirit of God, and

prayer be made unto God by them, then the angel of the prophetic Spirit who is with him filleth the man, and the man, being filled with the Holy Spirit, speaketh unto the multitude even as the Lord willeth. Thus shall the Spirit of the Divinity be made manifest; and such power as is of the Spirit of the Divinity is of the Lord. Listen, then," said he, "concerning the spirit that is earthly and empty, and hath no power, but is foolish. In the first place, the man who seemeth to have the spirit exalteth himself, and wisheth to have the pre-eminence, and straightway is hasty and shameless and talkative, and conversant with much luxury and with many other deceits, and taketh hire for his prophecy; but if he receive it not, he doth not prophecy. Can then the Spirit of God take hire and prophecy? It is not possible for the prophet of God to do this, but the spirit of such prophets is earthly. Next, it never approacheth to a synagogue of just men, but flieth from them. It cleaveth unto the doubters and to the empty, and prophesieth unto them in corners, and deceiveth them, speaking everything emptily according to their lusts; for they are empty whom it answereth. For the empty vessel placed along with the empty is not broken, but they harmonise with each other. But when he cometh unto a synagogue full of just men, who have the Spirit of the Divine nature, and prayer is made by them, that man is emptied, and the earthly spirit flies from him through fear, and the man is struck dumb and is altogether broken in pieces, not being able to speak. For if thou shalt fill a

cellar with vessels of wine or oil, and shalt place in it an empty jar, and again shalt empty the cellar, thou wilt find the vessel empty which thou hast placed there empty. Thus also the empty prophets when they come unto the spirits of the just, are found to be such as they were when they came. Thou hast thus the life of both kinds of prophets. Prove, therefore, by his works and his life the man who saith that he possesseth the Spirit. But do thou believe the Spirit that cometh from God, and that hath power. But in the spirit that is earthly and empty put no trust, because there is no power in it, for it cometh forth from the devil. Listen unto the parable which I am about to say unto thee. Take a stone and cast it unto heaven, and see if thou art able to touch it; or, again, take a water-pipe and insert it into the heaven, see if thou art able to bore the heaven." "How," said I, "Master, can these things be, for both these things of which thou hast spoken are impossible?" "As, therefore, both these things are impossible, so the earthly spirits are powerless and weak. Take, therefore, the power that cometh from above; for the hail-stone is the smallest grain, yet when it falleth on the head of a man, how much pain doth it cause. Or, again, take, for example, the drop that falleth from a reed on the ground, and boreth the stone. Thou seest, therefore, how the smallest things from above falling upon the ground have great power; so the Divine Spirit coming from above is powerful. Believe, therefore, this Spirit, but abstain from the other."

## The Twelfth Commandment.

### *On Good and Evil Desire.*

#### I.

**H**E saith unto me, "Take from thee all evil desire, but put on good and holy desire; for by putting on this desire thou shalt hate the evil desire, and shalt guide thyself as thou wilt. For evil desire is fierce and is hard to tame; for it is dreadful, and by its fierceness it impoverisheth men; especially if a servant of God fall into it, and be not wise, he is dreadfully impoverished by it, and it impoverisheth such as are not clothed with good desire, but are entangled with this world. These, therefore, doth it deliver over unto death." "What, I say, Master, are the works of evil desire that deliver men over unto death? Make them known unto me, and I will refrain from them." "Hearken," said he, "by what sort of deeds evil desire slayeth the servants of God.

#### II.

First of all, the desire for the wife or husband of another, the desire for excessive wealth, and for many needless dainties, the desire for

drunkenness, and for many other foolish luxuries ; for all luxury is foolish and useless to the servants of God. These desires, therefore, are evil, destroying the servants of God ; for this evil desire is the daughter of the devil. It, therefore, behoveth to abstain from evil desires, in order that, by abstaining, ye may live unto God. For as many as are ruled by them, and do not resist them, these are utterly destroyed ; for these desires are deadly. Do thou, therefore, put on the desire of righteousness, and, having armed thyself with the fear of the Lord, resist them. For the fear of the Lord dwelleth in good desire. Evil desire, if it see thee armed with the fear of the Lord, and resisting it, shall fly far from thee, and shall no longer appear unto thee, since it feareth thine arms. Do thou, therefore, being crowned with the garland of victory over it, go to the desire for righteousness, and having given unto it the prize that thou hast received, serve it even as it wisheth. If thou serve good desire, and submit thyself unto it, thou wilt be able to rule over the evil desire, and to bring it into subjection as thou wilt."

### III.

"I could wish to know," I said, "in what way I ought to serve the good desire." "Listen," he said, "thou shalt work justice and virtue, truth and the fear of the Lord, faith and meekness, and as many good things as are like these. By doing these things thou shalt be a servant well pleasing

unto God, and shalt live unto Him ; and whoever shall obey the good desire shall live unto God."

He finished, therefore, the twelve commandments, and said unto me, "Thou hast these commandments; walk in them, and exhort those that hear, that their repentance may be pure for the rest of the days of their life. Fulfil carefully this ministry which I give unto thee, and thou shalt do much. For thou shalt find favour among those who are about to repent, and they shall be persuaded by thy words. For I will be with thee, and will compel them to obey thee." But I replied unto him, "Master, these commandments are great and fair, and glorious, and able to gladden the heart of the man who is able to do them ; but I know not whether these commandments can be kept by man, for they are exceeding hard." He answered, and said unto me, "If thou affirm to thyself that they can be kept, thou wilt keep them easily, and they shall not be hard, but if it come into thy heart that they cannot be kept by man, thou wilt not keep them. But now, I say unto thee, if thou keep them not, but neglect them, thou shalt not have salvation, neither thou, nor thy children, nor thy house, since thou hast already judged in thine heart that these commandments cannot be kept by man.

#### IV.

He said these things unto me very angrily, so that I was confused, and feared him exceedingly.



For his form was changed, so that no man could bear his wrath. But, seeing me disturbed and altogether confused, he began to speak more mildly, and said unto me, "O foolish, unwise, and doubting man, perceivest thou not the glory of God, how great and strong, and wonderful it is, that he hath made the world for man, and hath placed the whole creation under man, and hath given full authority unto him to rule all things that are under heaven. If, therefore, he said, man is master of the creatures of God, and ruleth over all things, can he not rule over these commandments? The man who hath the Lord in his heart," he saith unto me, "is able to rule over all things, and over all these commandments. But such as have the Lord on their lips, but have their heart hardened, and are far from the Lord, to them these commandments are hard and difficult. Put, therefore, the Lord into your heart, O ye who are empty and light in the faith, and ye shall know that there is nothing easier or sweeter, or more gentle than these commandments. Be ye converted, all ye who walk in the commandments of the devil, even in uncomfortable, and bitter, and fierce impurities, and fear not the devil, because there is no strength in him against you. For I shall be with you, I, the angel of repentance, who am master over him. The devil hath fear alone, but his fear hath no force; therefore fear him not, and he will fly from you."

## V.

I say unto him, "Master, hearken to a few words of mine." "Say on," said he, "what thou willest." "Man," said I, "O Master, is eager to keep the commandments of God, and there is no man who doth not ask of the Lord that he may be made strong in His commandments, and may be subject unto them, but the devil is hard, and ruleth over them. He cannot," he said, "rule over the servants of God, who hope in Him with all their hearts. The devil can wrestle against them, but he cannot overthrow them. If, therefore, ye resist him, he shall be conquered and flee from you, being ashamed.

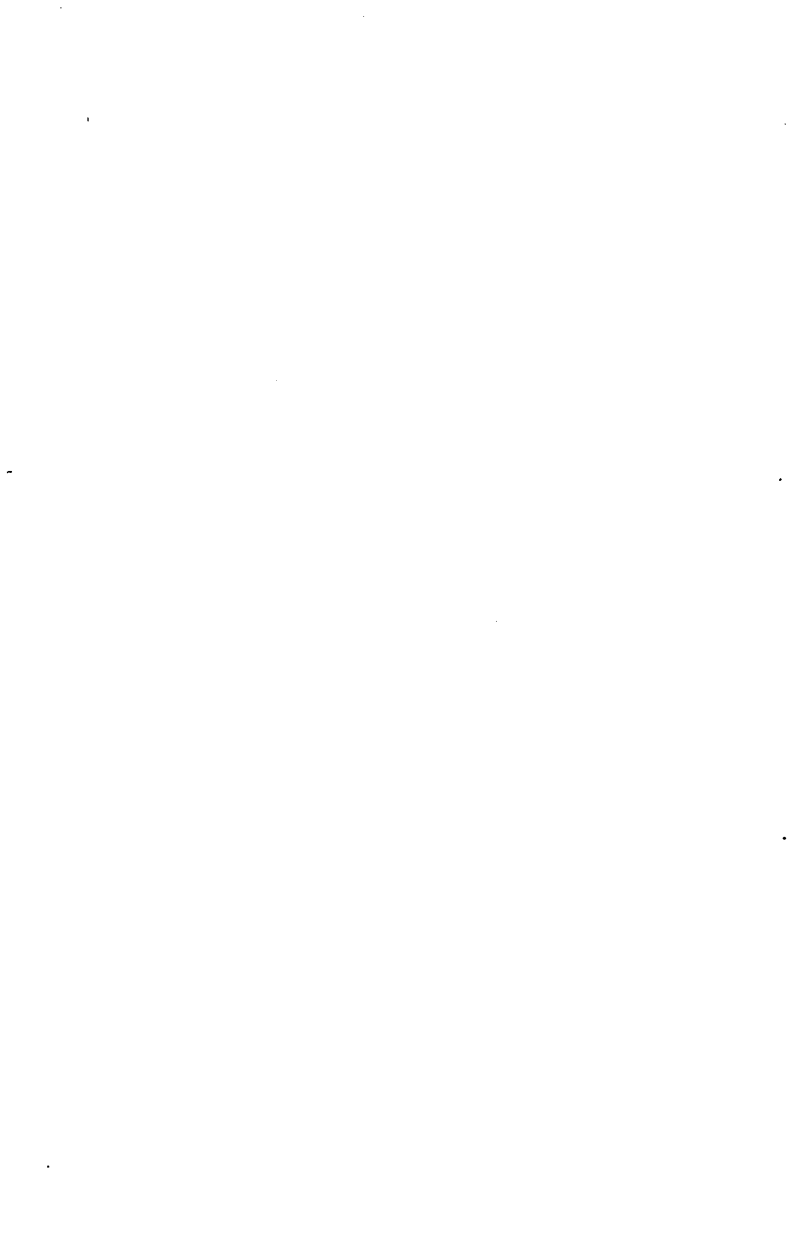
"But as many," he said, as are vain persons fear the devil, as if he had power. For as, when a man filleth many vessels with excellent wine, and among those vessels there are a few that are quite empty, he cometh unto the vessel, and taketh no notice of the full ones, for he knoweth that they are full, but noticeth the empty ones, fearing lest they should turn sour; for empty jars soon turn sour, and the pleasure of the wine is lost, so doth the devil come unto all the servants of God tempting them. As many as are full of faith resist him valiantly, and he departeth from them, not having a place where he can enter in. He cometh, therefore, unto the empty, and finding an opportunity, entereth into them, and what he wisheth he worketh in them, and they become his servants.

## VI.

But I, the angel of repentance, say unto you, Fear not the devil; for I have been sent to be with you who repent with all your heart, and to make you strong in the faith. Do ye, therefore, who through your sins have lost your life, and have added sin unto sin, and have weighed down your life, believe in God, because if ye turn unto the Lord with all your heart, and work righteousness for the rest of the days of your life, and serve Him according to His will, He shall heal your former sins, and ye shall have power to overcome the works of the devil. But fear not at all the threatening of the devil, for he is powerless, even as the sinews of a dead man. Listen, therefore, unto me, and fear Him who is all-powerful, even to save and to destroy, and keep these commandments, and ye shall live unto God." I say unto him, "Master, now have I been made strong in all the ordinances of the Lord, because thou art with me. And I know that thou wilt cut short all the power of the devil, and we shall rule over him, and prevail against all his works. And I hope, Master, that I shall be able to keep these commandments which thou hast commanded, if the Lord strengthen me to keep them." "Thou shalt keep them," he said, "if thy heart be pure towards the Lord; and all shall keep them, even as many as shall purify their hearts from the vain desires of this world, and shall live unto God."

**Book Third.**

**THE SIMILITUDES.**



## The First Similitude.

*That we have here no continuing City.*

**H**E said unto me, "Ye know that ye, who are the servants of God, dwell in a strange land, for your city is far off from this city. If, therefore," he said, "ye know the city in which ye are about to dwell, why do ye thus prepare lands and costly array, and edifices and vain buildings? He, therefore, who prepareth these things for this city is not able to return to his own city. O foolish, doubting, and miserable man, perceivest thou not that all these things are foreign, and under the authority of another. For the lord of this city will say, 'I do not wish thee to dwell in my city; come out from this city, for thou dost not use my laws.' Thou, therefore, who hast fields, and houses, and many other possessions, what wilt thou do with thy fields, and thy houses, and thy other possessions which are many, when thou art cast out by him? For the lord of this

country saith unto thee justly, 'Either use my laws, or depart out of my country.' What then must thou do, who art under the law in thine own city, on account of thy lands, and the rest of thy possessions? Thou must altogether renounce the law of thine own city, and must walk by the law of this city. Take heed whether it be not inexpedient for thee to renounce thine own law; for if thou shalt wish to return to thy city thou wilt not be received, because thou hast renounced the law of thy city, and shalt be excluded from it. Take heed therefore, and, as though thou wert dwelling in a foreign land, prepare no more for thyself than a sufficient competence, and be thou ready, so that when the lord of the city cometh to cast thee out as resisting his law, thou mayest go out from his city, and come unto thine own city, and use thine own law modestly and joyously. Take heed therefore, O ye who serve the Lord, and who have Him in your heart, work the works of God, remembering His commandments, and the promises which He promised, and put your trust in Him, for He will perform them if His commandments are kept. Let each man therefore, according as he is able, purchase not lands, but souls that are afflicted, visit the widows and orphans, and neglect them not; and expend your wealth and your preparations on such lands and houses as ye have received from the Lord; for to this end did your Master make you rich that ye should fulfil these services for Him. Far better is it to purchase such fields and

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possessions and houses as thou shalt find in thy city, when thou shalt remove unto it. This lavish expenditure is honourable and sacred, bringing neither grief nor fear, but bringing joy. But the luxury of the Gentiles follow not, for it is inexpedient for you who are the servants of God, but follow after your own luxury, an expenditure which is your own, in which you can rejoice, and corrupt not one another ; neither touch another man's property, nor lust after it, for it is an evil thing to desire the goods of another man ; but do thine own work, and thou shalt be saved."



## The Second Similitude.

*Concerning the Elm and the Vine.*

AND as I walked into the fields, and perceived the elm and the vine, and considered concerning them and their fruit, the shepherd appeared unto me and said, "What art thou meditating within thyself concerning the elm and the vine?" "I am considering," I said, "that they are most ornamental to each other." "These two trees," he said, "are appointed for a sign unto the servants of God." "I should be glad," I said, "to know the meaning of the sign of which thou speakest, which is given by these trees." "Thou seest," he said, "the elm and the vine." "I see them," I said. "Now the vine," he saith, "beareth fruit, but the elm is a tree without fruit. But the vine, if it ascend not the elm, cannot bear much fruit, being cast on the ground, and the fruit which it doth bear, it beareth rotten if it hang not on the elm. If, therefore, the vine hang upon the elm it beareth fruit, both from itself and from the elm.

Thou seest therefore that the elm produceth much fruit, not less than the vine, but rather more. Because," he saith, "the vine, when it hangeth upon the elm, produceth much and good fruit, but when cast upon the ground it produceth little and bad. This similitude, therefore, is applicable to the servants of God, even to the poor and to the rich." "How?" said I; "Master, make it known unto me." "Listen," he said. "The rich hath much wealth, but in the things relating to the Lord he is poor, being distracted by his wealth, and giveth but little thanks and intercession unto the Lord, and that which he giveth is small and weak, and hath no power above. When, therefore, the rich man hath regard unto the poor, he ministereth unto him the things that are needful, trusting that for what he shall do unto the poor he will be able to find payment with God; (for the poor man is rich in intercession and thanksgiving, and his intercession hath great power before God;) therefore the rich man ministereth all things to the poor, nothing doubting, but the poor man, being supplied by the rich, maketh intercession for him with God, giving thanks for him that gave unto him. And the rich man bestoweth yet more care on the poor in order that he may continue in life, for he knoweth that the intercession of the poor is accepted and rich before God. Both therefore perform their proper work. The poor man worketh the intercession in which he is rich, and which he hath received from the Lord; this he giveth unto the master who ministereth

unto his wants ; and the rich man, in like manner, furnisheth unto the poor, nothing doubting, the wealth that he hath received from the Lord. And this work is great and acceptable unto God, because the rich man hath understanding with respect to his wealth, and hath wrought good unto the poor from the gifts which the Lord hath given him, and hath finished rightly the ministry of the Lord. Among men, therefore, the elm seemeth not to bear fruit, and they know not, neither perceive that, if there cometh a drought, the elm having water nourisheth the vine, and the vine having water without intermission, giveth double fruit both for itself and for the elm. Thus, in like manner, the poor, by making intercession with the Lord on behalf of the rich, fulfil the object of their wealth, and again the rich, ministering unto the poor such things as be needful, fulfil the desire of their souls. Both therefore become partners in the work of righteousness, and the man who doth these things will not be abandoned by God, but his name will be written in the book of life. Blessed are the rich who understand that their wealth is from the Lord. For they who are thus minded will be able to do some good."

### The Third Similitude.

*Concerning Trees in Winter, and the Just and the Unjust.*

HE showed me many trees which had no leaves, but which appeared to be, as it were, withered, for they were all alike, and he said unto me, "Seest thou these trees?" "I see them," I said. "O Master, they are all alike, and are withered." He answered and said unto me, "These trees that thou seest are they that dwell in this world." "Wherefore," I said unto him, "Master, are they withered, as it were, and all alike?" "Because," he said, "neither the just are made manifest in this world nor the sinners, but they are all alike; for this world is winter to the just, and when they dwell with sinners they are not made manifest. For, as in the winter, the trees when they have shed their leaves are alike, and it doth not appear which are withered and which alive, so in this world neither the just nor the sinners are made manifest, but they are all alike."



### **The Fourth Similitude.**

*Concerning Trees in Summer, and the Just and the Unjust.*

**A** GAIN he showed me many trees, some sprouting, others withered, and he said unto me, "Seest thou these trees?" "I see them," I said. "O Master, some of them are sprouting, and some are withered." "These trees," he said, "that are sprouting are the just, who will abide unto the world to come. For the world to come is summer unto the just, but unto sinners it is winter. When, therefore, the mercy of the Lord shall shine forth, then shall they who serve the Lord be made manifest. Yea, they shall all be made manifest; for, as in summer, the fruits of each single tree are made manifest, and are known of what kind they are, so the fruits of the just shall be manifest, and they will be known which are flourishing in that world; but the Gentiles and sinners, who are like the withered trees that thou sawedst, such shall they be found, even withered and without fruit, in the world to come. And they shall be burned like wood, and shall be

made manifest what they are, because their deeds in their life were evil. For the sinners shall be burned, because they sinned and repented not; but the Gentiles shall be burned, because they knew not Him that created them. Do thou, therefore, bear fruit, that in that summer thy fruit may be known; but abstain from overmuch business, and thou shalt never sin; for they who do much, sin much, being distracted about their deeds, and in no respect serving their Lord. How, then," said he, "can such an one ask and receive anything from the Lord, since he serveth not the Lord? for they who serve Him shall receive their requests, but they who serve not the Lord shall receive nothing. For if a man do but a single deed, he is able in doing it to serve the Lord. For his mind will not be corrupted, so that he should depart from the Lord; but he shall serve him, being pure of heart. If, therefore, thou shalt do these things, thou wilt be able to bear fruit unto the world to come; and whosoever shall do these things shall bear fruit.

## The Fifth Similitude.

*Concerning the Vineyard and the Faithful Servant.*

### I.

AND as I fasted and sat by a certain mountain, and gave thanks unto the Lord for all the things that He had done unto me, I beheld the shepherd seated beside me, and saying, "Why hast thou come thus early?" "Because," I said, "I have a Station." "And what," he said, "is a Station?" "I am fasting," I said, "O Master." "And what," he said, "is this fast which ye are fasting?" "I am fasting," I said, "O Master, even as I have been accustomed." "Ye know not," he said, "how to fast unto the Lord; for this useless fast which ye keep unto Him is a thing of nought." "Wherefore," said I, "O Master, sayest thou this?" "I declare unto thee," he said, "that this is not a fast which ye thus think to keep. But I will teach you what is an acceptable and full fast unto the Lord. Listen," he said: "God desireth not such a vain fast as this. For, by fasting in this way, thou shalt do

nothing in righteousness ; but fast unto the Lord in such a manner as this :—Do no evil in thy life, and serve the Lord with a pure heart. Keep His commandments and walk in His ordinances, and let no evil desire come up into thine heart. If thou shalt do these things, thou shalt keep a great fast, and one acceptable unto God.”

## II.

“Listen to the similitude which I am about to tell unto thee relating to fasting. A certain man had a field and many slaves ; and in a certain portion of his field he planted a vineyard, and, having chosen a certain servant, faithful and well-pleasing and honoured, he called him unto himself and said unto him, ‘Take the vineyard that I have planted, and hedge it about until I come, and thou shalt do nothing else unto the vineyard ; and keep thou this commandment of mine, and I will free thee.’ Then the master of that servant departed to travel, and when he had departed, the servant took the vineyard and hedged it about ; and when he had finished the hedging of the vineyard, he saw that it was full of weeds. He reasoned, therefore, thus within himself, saying, ‘I have kept this commandment of my lord. I will now dig up this vineyard, and it will be fairer when it hath been digged ; and when it hath no weeds it will bring forth more fruit, not being choked by the weeds. He, therefore, took the vineyard and



digged it ; and all the weeds that were in the vineyard he plucked out, and that vineyard became very fair and flourishing when it had not weeds to choke it. And after some time the master of the servant and of the field came and entered into his vineyard ; and when he saw the vineyard fairly hedged about, and, beside that, digged up, and all the weeds plucked up, and the vines flourishing, he rejoiced exceedingly at the works of his servant. Having, therefore, called unto him his beloved son, who was his heir, and his friends, who were his counsellors, he told them what things he had commanded his servant, and what things he found done, and they rejoiced with his servant at the testimony which his lord had borne unto him. And he said unto them, ‘ I promised liberty unto this servant if he should keep my commandment which I commanded him, and he hath kept my commandment, and hath added to this vineyard a fair work, and hath pleased me exceedingly. On account, therefore, of this work which he hath wrought, I wish to make him joint-heir with my son, because when he had formed a good plan, he did not neglect it, but accomplished it.’ With this decision, therefore, of the master, the son and his friends were well pleased, that the servant should become joint-heir with the son. And, after a few days, the master of the house made a supper, and sent unto his servant much food from the supper. And when the servant had received the food that had been sent to him from the master, he took what was sufficient

for himself, and divided the rest among his fellow-servants; but his fellow-servants, when they had received the food, rejoiced, and began to pray for him that he might find greater favour with his master, because he thus used them. All these things that had happened the master heard, and again rejoiced greatly at his deed. When, therefore, the master had called together again all his friends and his son, he announced unto them the deed which he had done, with regard to the food which he had received; but they rejoiced still more that the servant should have become joint-heir with the son."

### III.

I said unto him, "O Master, I know not these parables, nor can I understand them unless thou explainest them unto me." "I will explain all things unto thee," he said, "and whatever things I shall say unto thee, I will explain unto thee. Keep the commandments of the Lord, and thou shalt be esteemed, and shalt be enrolled in the number of those who keep His commandments. But if thou do any good thing beyond the commandment of God thou wilt purchase unto thyself still greater glory, and wilt be held in higher esteem before God than thou wouldest otherwise have been. If, therefore, while keeping the commandment of God, thou add also these services, thou shalt rejoice, if thou keep them according to my commandment." I say unto him, "Master, whatever thou commandest

me I will keep it, for I know that thou art with me." "I will be with thee," he said, "because thou hast such zeal in well-doing ; and I will be with all of them," he saith, "even as many as have this zeal. This fast," he saith, "is exceeding honourable, if the commandments of our Lord are observed. In this way shalt thou guard this fast which thou art about to keep. First of all, guard thyself from every evil word and every evil desire, and purify thy heart from all the vanities of this world. If thou shalt keep these things, this thy fast shall be perfect. And in this way shalt thou fast : When thou hast finished the things that are written, on the day on which thou fastest, thou shalt taste nothing but bread and water. And when thou hast reckoned up the cost that thou wouldest have made on that day for the food that thou wouldest have eaten, thou shalt give it to the widow or to the orphan or unto him that is in want ; and thou shalt thus humble thyself, so that he who receiveth of thy humility may satisfy his soul and pray for thee unto the Lord. If thou shalt thus accomplish the fast as I commanded thee, thy sacrifice shall be acceptable before God, and this fast shall be set down in thy favour ; and this service being thus performed is fair, and sacred, and acceptable unto God. These things thou shalt thus keep with thy children and thy whole house ; and if thou keep them happy shalt thou be ; and as many as shall hear these things and keep them shall be happy, and as many things as they shall ask of the Lord they shall receive."

## IV.

I besought him much that he would explain unto me the parable of the field, and of the master, and of the vineyard, and of the servant who hedged the vineyard, and of the stakes, and of the weeds that were plucked out of the vineyard, and of the son, and of the friends who were counsellors of the master, for I understood that all these things were a parable. But he answered me and said, "Thou art extremely obstinate in asking; thou oughtest not to ask anything at all, for if it be right that it should be explained unto thee, it will be explained." I said unto him, "Master, whatever things thou showest unto me and dost not explain, I shall behold in vain, since I know not what that they are; in like manner, if thou speak unto me in parables and do not explain them, in vain shall I have heard anything from thee." But he again answered me, saying: "Whoever is a servant of God and hath his Lord in his heart, he asketh from Him wisdom and receiveth it, and he knoweth the interpretation of every parable, and the sayings of the Lord that are spoken in parables become known unto him. But as many as are slothful and slow to prayer they hesitate to ask of the Lord, but the Lord is abounding in mercy and giveth continually to all who ask of Him. But thou who hast been strengthened by the Holy Angel, and hast received from Him such powers of intercession, and who art not sloth-

ful, why dost thou not ask wisdom of the Lord and receive it of Him?" I say unto him, "Master, since I have thee with me I am able to ask and to question thee, for thou showest me all things and speakest with me; but if I saw or heard these things apart from thee, I should have asked the Lord that they might be explained unto me."

## V.

"I said unto thee," he replied, "but just now, that thou art a rogue and obstinate in inquiring for the interpretation of parables; but since thou art so obstinate, I will explain unto thee the parable of the field, and of all the accompaniments thereof, that thou may mayest make them known unto all. Listen now," he said, "and understand them. The field is this world. The Lord of the field is He who created all things, and made them ready and strengthened them. The servant is the Son of God. But the vines are this people which He planted Himself. The stakes are the holy angels of the Lord who keep together His people. The weeds that are plucked out of the vineyard, are the iniquities of the servants of God. The food which He sent him from His table are the commandments which He gave unto His people through His Son. His friends and counsellors are the holy angels who were first created. The absence of the Master is the time that remaineth until his coming." I

say unto him, "O Master, all these things are great and wonderful and glorious. Was I not," I said, "able to understand these things?" "No, nor could any other of men even though he were extremely clever, understand them. Still," I said, "explain unto me further what I am about to ask." "Speak," said he, "whatever thou desirest." "Wherefore," said I, "O Master, is the Son of God represented as a slave in the parable?"

## VI.

"Listen," he said, "the Son of God is not found in the form of a slave, but He is appointed to great authority and dominion." "How?" said I; "O Master, I understand not." "Because," he said, "the Lord hath planted the vineyard, that is, He hath created the people and given them over to His Son. And His Son hath appointed the angels over them to keep guard on them, and He hath purified their sins by labouring much and bearing many toils, for no one is able to cultivate a vineyard without toil and labour. He therefore, having purified the sins of the people, hath showed unto them the paths of life, having given unto them the law that He received from His Father. Thou seest," he said, "that He is the Lord of the people, since He hath received all authority from His Father. But why the Lord took His Son and the glorious angels to be counsellors concerning the inheritance of the slave—hearken. The holy pre-

existent spirit, which created the whole creation, God hath made to dwell in the flesh which He chose. This flesh, in which He made the spirit to dwell, was subject unto the spirit, walking honourably in holiness and purity, having in no respect at all polluted the spirit. After therefore it had behaved nobly and purely, and had laboured with the spirit, and had co-operated with it, and had, together with the Holy Spirit, conducted itself boldly and bravely in everything, He made it a partner with the Spirit. For this sojourning of the flesh hath pleased the Lord, because while, having the Holy Spirit, it hath not been polluted upon the earth. He took therefore as His counsellors His Son and the glorious angels, that this flesh, after it had served the spirit blamelessly, might have a certain place to dwell in, and that it might not seem to have lost the reward of its service; for it, in which the Holy Spirit hath dwelt, having been found without pollution or blemish, shall receive its reward. Thou hast thus the explanation of this parable also."

## VII.

"I rejoiced," I say, "Master, that I have heard this solution. "Listen, now," he said, "keep this thy flesh pure and undefiled, that the Spirit that dwelleth in it may bear witness to it, and that thy flesh may be justified. Beware, therefore, lest it come into thy heart, that this thy flesh is perishable, and thou abuse it by any pollution. If thou pollute

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thy flesh thou pollutest the Holy Spirit; and if thou pollute thy flesh, thou shalt not live. If there hath been any former ignorance, I say, O Master, before these words have been heard, how can the man be saved who hath polluted his flesh?" Concerning the former ignorance, he says, "God alone is able to give a remedy, for His is all authority, but if for the future thou pollute not thy flesh nor thy spirit, (for both of these are united, and cannot be polluted without each other,) thou wilt do well; keep, therefore, both pure, and thou shalt live unto God."



## The Sixth Similitude.

*Concerning the two kinds of men who are luxurious, and their death and punishment.*

### I.

AS I sate in my house, and glorified the Lord, concerning all the things that I had seen ; and considered concerning the commandments, how that they were excellent and powerful, and glorious, and able to save the soul of man, I said within myself, Happy shall I be if I walk in the commandments, and whosoever shall walk in them shall be happy. And while I said these things within myself, I beheld him of a sudden sitting beside me, and speaking thus, “Why doubttest thou concerning the commandments that I have commanded thee? they are excellent. Doubt not at all, but put on faith in the Lord, and walk in them ; for I will make thee strong in them. These commandments are expedient for such as are about to repent, for if they walk not in them their repentance is in vain. Do ye, therefore, who repent, cast away the

wickedness of this world that weareth you out ; and, having put on the whole virtue of righteousness, ye shall be able to keep these commandments, and no longer to add unto your sins. Walk, therefore, in these my commandments, and ye shall live unto God—all these things have been spoken unto you from me. And after he had spoken these things with me he said unto me, "Let us go into the fields, and I will show thee the shepherd of the sheep. "Let us go, O Master," I said. And we came unto a plain ; and he sheweth me a shepherd, even a young man, clothed in garments of a saffron colour ; and he pastured very many sheep, and these sheep were, as it were, well fed, and very wanton and joyous, leaping here and there, and the shepherd himself was glad over his flock ; and the form of the shepherd himself was very joyous, and he ran about among the sheep.

## II.

And he said unto me, "Seest thou this shepherd ?" "I see him," I said, "O Master." "This one," he saith, "is the messenger of luxury and deceit. He weareth out the souls of the servants of God, and subverteth them from the truth by deceiving them with evil desires, in which they perish. For they forget the commandments of the living God, and walk in deceit and vain luxuries, and are destroyed by this angel, some unto death and some unto corruption." I said unto him, "O

Master, I understand not what mean the words, Unto death and unto corruption." "Listen," He replied. "The sheep whom thou seest joyous and leaping, these are they who have been plucked away from God completely, and have given themselves up to luxuries and deceit, but they have uttered no blasphemy against the Lord. These, therefore, are they who have been perverted from the truth. In these there is hope of repentance, by which they are able to live. Corruption, therefore, hath hope of a certain renewal, but death bringeth eternal perdition." Again, I went on a little further, and He showed me a great shepherd, as it were wild in form, having a white goatskin put around him, and he had a certain wallet upon his shoulders, and a very strong staff with branches on it, and a great scourge. And his look was very stern, so that I feared him for the looks that he had. This shepherd, therefore, received the sheep from the young shepherd, even those that were wanton and luxurious, but leaped not about, and he cast them into a certain craggy and thorny place full of briars, so that the sheep could not disentangle themselves from the thorns and the briars, but they became entangled among the briars and thorns. These, therefore, becoming entangled, pastured among the briars and thorns, and they were in extreme misery, being beaten by him. And he drove them hither and thither, and gave them no rest, and altogether these sheep were in no good condition.

## III. `

Beholding them, therefore, thus beaten and vexed, I was grieved over them, because they were thus troubled and had no rest. I said, therefore, unto the shepherd who was speaking with me, "Master, who is this shepherd who is so cruel and bitter, and hath no compassion on these sheep?" "This," he said, "is the angel of vengeance, and he is one of the just angels, and is set over the performance of vengeance. He receiveth, therefore, those that wander from God and walk in the desires and lusts of this world, and taketh vengeance on them, even as they deserve, by dreadful and varied punishments." "I wished," I said, "O Master, to know these varied punishments and tortures, of what sort they are." "Listen," he said, "to these various tortures and punishments. The tortures come during life; for some are punished by losses, some by defeats, some by varied infirmities, others by all kinds of disorder, others by being insulted by the unworthy, and suffering in many other ways. For many, becoming unsettled in their plans, attempt many things, and nothing at all succeedeth to them, and they say that they are not prosperous in their deeds, and it entereth not into their hearts that they have done evil deeds, but they accuse the Lord. When, therefore, they are troubled with every kind of affliction, then are they handed over to me for good instruction, and are made strong in

the faith of the Lord ; and for the remaining days of their life they serve the Lord in a pure heart, and are prosperous in their deeds, receiving from the Lord all things whatsoever they ask ; and then they glorify the Lord, because they have been delivered over to me, and no longer suffer any of the evil things."

#### IV.

I said unto him, " Master, show me yet further this." " What further seekest thou?" he said. " Whether," I said, " Master, those who are luxurious and who are deceived are tormented during the same length of time as they have been luxurious and deceived?" " They are tortured," he replied, " in the same manner ; for those who are so luxurious and forget God ought to be tortured seven-fold." He said unto me, " Thou art foolish, and knowest not the power of the torture." " If I had known," I reply, " O Master, I should not have asked thee to tell me." " Hearken," he said, " to the power of both. The time of luxury and deceit is one hour, but the hour of torment is equal to thirty days. If, therefore, a man be luxurious and deceived for one day, and be tortured for one day, the day of torture is equivalent to a whole year ; for as many days as a man is luxurious, so many years is he tortured. Thou seest, therefore, that the time of luxury and deceit is very short, the time of punishment and torment long."

## V.

"Yet further," I say, "O Master, I understand not entirely concerning the time of deceit, and luxury and of torture. Explain it to me more distinctly." He answered and said unto me, "Thy folly abideth with thee, and thou art not willing to purify thine heart, and to serve God. Beware," he said, "lest the time be fulfilled, and thou be found foolish. Hear, therefore," he says, "even as thou wishest, that thou mayest understand them. He who is luxurious and is deceived for one day, and who doeth the things that he wisheth, is clothed with much foolishness, and understandeth not the action that he doeth until the morrow, for he forgetteth what he did the day before. For luxury and deceit have no memories, on account of the folly with which each is clothed. But when vengeance and torture have cleaved unto a man for one day, he is punished and tormented for a year; for punishment and torture have long memories. Being, therefore, tortured and punished the whole year, he remembereth perchance his luxury and deceit, and knoweth that it is on their account he suffereth evil things; therefore, every man who is luxurious and is deceived is tortured in this way, because, though they have life, they have delivered themselves over unto death." "What kinds of luxury," I say, "O Master, are injurious?" "Every kind of action," he replied, "is luxury to a man, whatsoever he doth

with pleasure; for the ill-tempered man, if he gratify his own favourite action, acteth luxuriously; and the adulterer, and the drunkard, and the talkative, and the liar, and the covetous, and the fraudulent, and he who doeth things similar to these, gratifieth his own disease; he is, therefore, luxurious in his action. All these methods of luxury are injurious to the servants of God. Owing, therefore, to these deceits do they so suffer who are punished and tortured. There are also methods of luxury that save men. For many who do what is right are luxurious, borne along by their own pleasure in doing right. This luxury, therefore, is expedient for the servants of God, and gaineth life for a man of this disposition. But the injurious luxuries mentioned before procure tortures and punishments for them; and if they remain in them and do not repent, they purchase unto themselves death."

## The Seventh Similitude.

*Concerning the bringing forth Fruits meet for Repentance.*

### I.

AFTER a few days I beheld him on the same plain where I also had seen the shepherds, and he said unto me, "What seekest thou with me?" I say unto him, "Master, that thou mayest command the avenging shepherd to come out from my house, for he troubleth me much." "It behoveth thee," he said, "to be troubled, for thus," he said, "did the glorious angel order the things that concern thee, for he wisheth thee to be tempted." "What," said I, "O Master, have I done so evil that I should be delivered over to this angel?" "Listen," he said: "Thy sins are many, yet they are not so many as to cause thee to be delivered over to this angel; but thy house hath committed great iniquities and sins, and the glorious angel hath become enraged at thy deeds, and on this account hath he commanded thee to be troubled for a certain time,



in order that they too may repent, and may purify themselves from every lust of this world. When, therefore, they shall repent and be purified, then shall the angel of vengeance depart from them." I say unto him, "Master, if they have done such things that the glorious angel is enraged against them, what have I done?" "They cannot," he said, "be tormented unless thou, the head of the house, art tormented; for if thou art tormented, they also of necessity will be tormented; but while thou art in prosperity they cannot have any affliction." "But behold," say I, "O Master, they have repented with all their heart." "I know," said he, "that they have repented with all their heart. Thinkest thou that the sins of those who repent are forgiven? Not entirely. But it is necessary that he who repenteth should torment his own soul, and should be thoroughly humble in all his deeds, and should be afflicted with all the various kinds of affliction; and if he endure the afflictions that come upon him, He who made and strengthened all things will altogether have compassion upon him, and will give him some remedy; and this He will do when He beholdeth the heart of any one who repenteth to be free from every evil deed. But it is expedient for thee and thy house now to be afflicted. But why should I say many things to thee? It is necessary that thou shouldst be afflicted, even as that angel of the Lord, who hath delivered thee unto me, hath commanded; and for this do thou give thanks unto the Lord, that He hath thought thee worthy to have thy

affliction showed unto thee beforehand, that having known it beforehand thou mayest bear it with fortitude." I say unto him, "Master, be thou with me, and I shall be able to endure all affliction." "I will be with thee," he said. "I will ask also the avenging angel to afflict thee more lightly; but thou shalt be afflicted for a short time, and shalt again be restored unto thine house. Only abide in humility, and in serving the Lord with a heart entirely pure; and let thy children and thine house do likewise; and walk in my commandments which I command thee, and thy repentance will be powerful and pure. And if thou keep these commandments, together with thy house, all affliction shall depart from thee; and affliction," he said, "shall depart from all, even from as many as walk in these commandments of mine."

## The Eighth Similitude.

*Concerning the Willow and its Branches.*

### I.

**H**E showed me a great willow overshadowing plains and mountains, and beneath the shadow of the willow came all who were called by the name of the Lord; and a glorious angel of the Lord, exceeding tall, stood beside the willow, having a great sickle, and he lopped branches from the willow, and gave them to the people who sheltered beneath it; and he gave unto them small rods as it were a cubit in length; but, after all had received the rods, the angel laid aside the sickle, and the tree was whole, even as I at first beheld it. And I wondered in myself, saying, "How is it that the tree is whole, when so many branches have been cut off?" And the shepherd said unto me, "Wonder not if the tree hath remained whole after that so many branches have been cut off; but stay awhile. But when thou hast seen all

things," he said, "then shall there be explained unto thee what they mean." Then the angel who had given the rods unto the people demanded them back from them; and in the same order as they received them they were called unto him, and each of them gave back the rods, and the angel of the Lord received and considered them. From some he received the rods withered, and eaten as it were by the moth. The angel commanded those who had given back such rods as these to stand apart; and others gave them back withered, but not moth-eaten, and those he commanded to stand apart; and others gave them back half withered, these also stood apart; and others gave up their rods half withered, and having clefts, and these stood apart; and others gave up their rods green, and having clefts, and these stood apart; and others gave up their rods half withered and half green, and these stood apart; and others gave up their rods two-thirds green and one-third withered, and these also stood apart; and others gave up their rods two-thirds withered and one-third green, and these stood apart; and others gave up their rods all but entirely green, but a very small part of them, even the extremity, was withered, and they had clefts in them, and these stood apart; and of others a very small part was green, and the end of the rod was withered, and these stood apart; and others came bringing their rods green as they received them from the angel; and the greater part of the crowd gave back the rods in this condition, but the angel rejoiced

exceedingly over them, and they stood apart; and others gave up their rods green, and having shoots upon them, and these stood apart, and over them the angel rejoiced exceedingly; and others gave back their rods green, and having shoots upon them, and their shoots had, as it were, a certain fruit; and those men whose rods were found of such a kind were exceeding glad, and the angel rejoiced over them, and the shepherd was exceeding glad over them.

## II.

And the angel of the Lord commanded crowns to be brought; and there were brought crowns made, as it were, out of palm, and he crowned the men who had given back the rods which had the shoots and fruit, and sent them away into the tower; and the others he sent into the tower after that he had set a seal on them; even those who had given up their rods green, and having shoots, but the shoots having no fruit; and they who walked into the tower all had the same clothing, even white as snow; and they who gave back their rods green as they received them, he sent away, having given them a garment and seals. And after the angel had finished these things, he said unto the shepherd, "I go away; but thou shalt send them within the walls, according as each is worthy to have his habitation. But observe their rods carefully, and so dismiss them. But

observe them carefully. Beware lest any one escape thy notice. But if any one do so, I will test them at the altar." When he had thus spoken to the shepherd he departed ; and after that the angel had departed, the shepherd saith unto me, "Let us take the rods of all and plant them, to see if any of them will be able to live." I say unto him, "Master, how can these dry things live?" He answered and said unto me, "This tree is the willow, a kind of tree very tenacious of life ; if the shoots are planted, and have but a little moisture, many of them will live. So let us endeavour to supply them with water. If any of them is able to live, I will rejoice together with them ; if any live not, I shall not be found careless." The shepherd commanded me to call them just as each of them was stationed. They came therefore in ranks and gave up their rods to the shepherd, and the shepherd received the rods, and planted them in ranks. And after that he had planted them, he poured much water on them, so that the rods could not appear by reason of the water. And after that he had watered the rods, he said unto me, "Let us go, and after a few days let us return and consider all the rods ; for He who made this tree wisheth that all should live who have received branches from this tree ; and I too hope, concerning these rods, that, after that they have received moisture, and have been watered with water, the greater part of them will live."

## III.

I say unto him, "Master, make known unto me what this tree is, for I am perplexed concerning it, that after so many of its branches have been cut off, the tree should be whole, and nothing should appear to have been cut off from it. About this therefore I am perplexed." "Listen," said he. "This great tree that overshadoweth plains and mountains, and the whole earth, is the law of God that was given to the whole world. But this law is the Son of God who hath been preached unto the ends of the earth. But they who are under the shelter, are the people who have heard the preaching, and have believed upon Him. But the great and glorious angel is Michael, who hath the authority over this people, and ruleth them; for this is he who giveth the law into the hearts of them that believe. He observeth, therefore, those to whom he hath given it, to see whether they have kept it. Now thou seest the rods of each separately, for the rods are the law. Thou seest then that many of the rods are useless. Now thou shalt understand concerning them all,—even those who have not kept the law,—and shalt behold the habitation of each of them." I say unto him, "Master, why hath he sent some into the tower, and left some unto thee?" "As many," he replied, "as have transgressed the law which they received from him, he hath left unto my authority that they may repent; but as many as have been obedient unto

the law, and kept it, he hath them under his own authority." "Who then," say I, "Master, are they who are crowned, and who have gone into the tower." "These are they who have suffered for the law. But the others, even they who have given up their rods green, and having shoots upon them, but not having fruit, are they who have been afflicted for the sake of the law, but who did not though suffering deny their law. But they who gave them up green as they received them, are grave men and just, who walked carefully in a pure heart, and kept the commandments of the Lord. But the remainder thou shalt understand when I shall have surveyed these rods that have been planted and watered."

#### IV.

And after a few days we came unto the place, and the shepherd sat in the place of the angel, and I stood beside him; and he saith unto me, "Gird thyself with a clean coarse garment of raw flax."

And seeing me girded and ready to minister to him, "Call," he said, "the men whose rods are planted, in the order in which each of them gave them back." And I departed into the plain and called them all, and they arranged all the ranks. And he said, "Let each pluck out his own rod and bring it unto me. And first they gave them back who had them withered and broken, and because they were found thus withered and broken he commanded



them to stand apart. Then they gave them back who had them withered and not broken ; and some of them gave back their rods green, and some of them withered and eaten, as it were, by moths ; those, therefore, who had given them up green he commanded to stand apart by themselves ; and those who had given them up withered and broken he commanded to stand with the first. Then they gave them back whose rods were half withered and had clefts ; and many of them gave them back green and not having clefts ; and some of them gave them back green, and having shoots, and on the shoots fruit, such as those had who went crowned into the tower ; and some gave them up withered and eaten away ; and some gave them up withered and not eaten away, and some as they were before, withered and having clefts. And he commanded each to stand apart, some in their own ranks, and some by themselves.

## V.

Then they who had their rods green and having clefts gave them back ; these all gave them back green, and stood in their own ranks, and the shepherd rejoiced over them, because they were all changed and had lost their clefts. And some gave them up half green and half dry, and the rods of some were found entirely green, and of some half-withered, and of some dry and eaten away, and some green and having shoots ; then all departed, each to his

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rank. Then they who had the two parts green, and the third part withered, gave them up. And many of them gave them up green, and many half withered, and others gave them up withered and eaten away. These all stood in their own rank. Also they whose rods were green, but were in a very small part withered and had clefts in them, gave them up; and some of this number gave up their rods green, and some gave them up green and having shoots, and then all departed into their own ranks. Then they gave them up whose rods were to a very small extent green, but for the main part withered. The rods of these were, for the most part, found green, and having shoots and fruit on the shoots, and others were entirely green. Over these rods the shepherd rejoiced exceedingly because they were thus found, and each of them departed to his own station.

## VI.

And after that he had considered all the rods the shepherd said unto me, "I said unto thee that this tree is tenacious of life. Thou seest," he says, "how many have repented and are saved." "Master," said I, "I see it." "It is in order that thou mightest see the compassion of the Lord, that it is great and glorious, and that He hath given His Spirit to those worthy of repentance." "Why, then, I say, Master, have not all these repented?" "To those," he replied, "whose hearts are about to

become pure, and to serve Him with their whole heart, to them He hath given repentance. But those in whom He hath seen craftiness and wickedness, who are about to repent in hypocrisy, to them he hath not given repentance, lest they should again pollute His name." I say unto him, "Master, now, I pray, explain to me, concerning those who have given back their rods, of what sort each of them is, and what is their habitation; that they who have believed, and have received the seal and have broken it, and have not kept it whole, may hear, and having come to a sense of their deeds, may repent, receiving from thee a seal, and may glorify the Lord because He hath had compassion on them, and hath sent thee to renew their spirits." "Hearken," he said, "they whose rods have been found withered and eaten by moths, these are the apostates and betrayers of the Church, they who have blasphemed the Lord by their sins, and who were ashamed of the name of the Lord by which they were called—these, therefore, at the last were dead unto God. But thou seest that not even one of them repented, though they heard the words that I spoke unto them, even the words that I charged thee; from such as these life hath departed; but they who gave them back withered and not eaten by moths, they are like unto them, for they were hypocrites and bringers in of strange doctrines and perverters of the servants of God, especially of those who had sinned, not allowing them to repent, but persuading them by foolish

teaching. These, then, have the hope of repentance ; but thou seest that many of them have repented from the time that I spoke unto them, and still more of them shall repent ; but as many as shall not repent have lost their lives, but as many as have repented have become good, and their dwelling hath been placed within the first walls, and some of them have even ascended into the tower. Thou seest then," he said, "that the repentance of sinners bringeth life, but the absence of repentance bringeth death."

## VII.

"And as many as have given them up half withered and having clefts in them, listen, concerning them. They whose rods are half-withered in the same way are double-minded ; for they neither live nor are dead. But they who have them half withered and with clefts in them, these are double-minded and slanderers, and no longer at peace among themselves, but ever at variance. But even for them," he said, "is repentance possible. Thou seest," he said, "which of them have repented, and still," he said, "there is in them the hope of repentance, and as many of them as have repented shall have their habitation in the tower ; but as many as have repented more slowly shall dwell within the walls ; but as many as do not repent, yet abide in their deeds, shall die the death. But those who gave back their rods green, and having clefts, these

have always been faithful and good, but having a certain emulation, one with another, for the first place, and for glory of some kind or other. But all these are foolish, having emulation with each other for the first place ; but even these, since they are good, when they have heard my commandments, have purified themselves and have quickly repented, therefore their habitation hath been given them in the tower. But if any one return to striving he shall be cast out of the tower, and shall lose his life. But life belongeth unto all those who keep the commandments of the Lord. But in His commandments there is nothing concerning superiority or concerning glory of any kind, but concerning patience and humility among men. Among such, therefore, is the life of the Lord, but among those who cause divisions, and among the lawless is there death."

#### VIII.

"But they who gave up their rods half green and half-withered, these are they who were entangled in business and did not cleave unto the saints ; on this account the half of each is alive, and the half dead. Many, therefore, when they had heard my commandments repented, and as many as repented have their habitation in the tower. But some of them revolted entirely ; these therefore have no repentance. For from regard to their worldly business they blasphemed the Lord and henceforth denied Him ; they therefore lost their life

through the wickedness which they practised. And many of them were double-minded; for these there is still place for repentance if they quickly repent, and their habitation shall be in the tower; but if they repent more slowly they will dwell within the walls; but if they do not repent, they too have lost their life. But they who have given back their rods two thirds withered and one third green, these are they who have denied their Lord with various denials. Many, therefore, have repented, but some have doubted and been at variance; for these therefore there is repentance if they repent soon and do not abide in their pleasures, but if they abide in their deeds, these too procure for themselves death."

## IX.

"But they who gave up their rods two thirds withered, and one third green, these are they who were once faithful, but after that they had grown rich and had become of renown among the Gentiles, they put on great pride, and became high-minded, and abandoned the truth, and did not cleave unto the just, but lived with the Gentiles, and this way was sweeter unto them; but they did not revolt from God, but remained in the faith, though they performed not the deeds of faith. Many, therefore, of them repented, and have their habitation in the tower; and others living with the Gentiles unto the end, and being corrupted by the vain opinions of the Gentiles, revolted from God in their deeds, and

served the works of the Gentiles ; these were counted among the Gentiles ; and others of them were double-minded, not hoping to be saved owing to the deeds which they had done ; and others were double-minded and made schism among themselves. There is, therefore, still repentance for those who were double-minded owing to their deeds ; but their repentance must be speedy in order that their habitation may be in the tower. But for those who do not repent, but abide in their pleasures, death is near."

## X.

"But they who gave up their rods green, but with the extremities withered and having clefts, these have been all along good and faithful and of good repute before God, but they have erred a very little, owing to small desires, and from having small things against each other ; but when they had heard my words the greater part of them quickly repented, and their habitation was in the tower. But some of them doubted, and some by doubting caused a greater division ; among these therefore there is hope of repentance, because they were always good, and hardly will any of them perish. But they who gave up their rods withered, but with a very small portion of them green, these are they who merely believed, but wrought the works of iniquity. But they never departed from God, and bore His name gladly, and gladly received into their houses the servants of God ; and when they had heard of

this repentance they repented without doubting, and work all virtue and righteousness, and some of them willingly endured even to be slain, knowing the deeds which they had done. The habitation therefore of all these will be in the tower."

## XI.

And after that he had finished the explanation of all the rods, he said unto me, "Go and tell all men to repent, and they shall live unto God. Because the Lord, having had compassion, hath sent me to give repentance unto all men, though some are not worthy owing to their works; but the Lord being compassionate wisheth that the invitation which was given through His Son should be continued." I say unto him, "Master, I hope that all men, when they have heard these things, will repent, for I am persuaded that each of them when he knoweth his own deeds and feareth God will repent." And he answered and said unto me, "As many as shall purify themselves with their whole heart from their evil deeds which have been afore-mentioned, and shall no longer add anything to their sins, shall receive from the Lord a healing of their former sins, if they doubt not at these commandments, and they shall live unto God. But do thou walk in these commandments of mine and live." When he had showed me these things, and had spoken all that I have recounted, he said unto me, "The rest will I show thee after a few days."



## The Ninth Similitude.

*Concerning the building of the Tower.*

### I.

AND after that I had written the commandments and similitudes of the shepherd, who is the angel of repentance, he came unto me and said unto me, "I wish to show thee as many things as the Holy Spirit showed thee, which spake unto thee in the form of the Church; for that Spirit is the Son of God. But because thou wert weaker in the flesh it was not showed unto thee by the angel; but when thou becamest strong through the Spirit, and grewest mighty in thy strength, so that thou wert able even to see the angel, then was the building of the tower revealed unto thee by the Church; and thou beheldest all things with virtue and gravity, as though shown unto thee by a virgin. But now thou seest them by means of an angel through the same Spirit; but it behoveth thee to hear everything more accurately from me. For this cause I was ap-

pointed by the glorious angel to dwell in thy house, that thou mightest see all things clearly, in nothing being afraid, even as before." And he led me away into Arcadia to a certain round mountain; and seated me on the top of the mountain, and showed me a great plain; and around the plain twelve mountains, having forms different one from another. The first was black as soot; the second was bare, not having grass on it; the third was full of thorns and thistles; the fourth had grass on it half withered, the upper part of the grass being green, but the part by the roots withered; and some of the grass when the sun burnt it became withered; but the fifth mountain was rough and had green grass on it; and the sixth mountain was entirely full of clefts, some small and some great, and the grass was not very flourishing but was somewhat withered; but the seventh mountain had grass flourishing on it, and the whole mountain was fertile, and every kind of animals and of birds fed on that mountain, and the more the cattle and birds fed there, so much the more did the grass on that mountain thrive; but the eighth mountain was full of springs, and every kind of creature of the Lord drank from the springs of that mountain; and the ninth mountain had no water at all and was entirely desolate, and had in it deadly serpents destroying mankind; but the tenth mountain had very great trees and was entirely shadowed over, and under the shadow of the trees lay sheep resting and chewing the cud; but the eleventh mountain was entirely

covered with trees, and those trees were fruitful, ornamented with different kinds of fruit, so that any one seeing them would desire to eat of the fruit ; but the twelfth mountain was entirely white, and its appearance was gladsome, and this mountain was the most beauteous to look upon.

## II.

And in the midst of the plain he showed me a great white rock ascending out of the plain, and the rock was higher than the mountains ; it was square, so that it could contain the whole world. And the rock was old, and it had a gate cut out of it ; but the excavation of the gate seemed unto me to be new, and the gate sparkled in the sun, so that I wondered at the brightness of the gate. And around the gate there stood twelve virgins, the four who stood at the corners seemed unto me to be more glorious than the others, (yet the others were glorious,) and they stood at the four quarters of the gate, standing there by twos, two virgins between each quarter ; and they were clothed in linen tunics, and were girded in a seemly fashion, having their right shoulder bare as though about to carry some burden. Thus they were prepared, for they were exceedingly joyous and eager. And after I had seen these things I wondered within myself because I had seen great and glorious things, and again I was perplexed about the virgins, because, though so delicate, they stood up like men, as though they

were about to bear the whole heavens. And the shepherd said unto me, "Why reasonest thou within thyself, and doubtest, and bringest grief upon thyself? But do not thou as though thou wert wise, endeavour to understand the things that thou canst not, but ask the Lord to the end that thou mayest receive wisdom and understand them. Thou art not able to see the things behind thee, but thou seest the things before thee. Leave alone, therefore, the things that thou art not able to see, and trouble not thyself about them ; but be master of the things that thou seest, and trouble not concerning the remainder. But I will explain unto thee everything that I shall show unto thee ; look, therefore, at the remainder."

### III.

Then I saw that six men had come, tall and glorious, and like each other in form ; and they called a certain multitude of men, and they who came were tall, and handsome, and powerful ; and the six men commanded them to build a certain tower on the top of the rock. And there arose a great noise from those men who came to build the tower, who ran hither and thither in a circle around the gate ; but the virgins who stood around the gate spake unto the men to hasten the building of the tower, and the virgins spread out their hands as though about to receive something from the men ; but the six men commanded the stones to come up from a certain gulf, and to go into the building of the

tower ; then there went up ten stones square and bright, not hewn in the quarry. But the six men called the virgins and commanded them to carry all the stones that were about to go into the building of the tower, and to go through the gate and to give them to the men who were about to build the tower ; but the virgins distributed among themselves the first ten stones which went up from the abyss, and bore them together, stone by stone.

#### IV.

And just as they stood together around the gate, in that order, they who seemed to be able, bore the stone, and bent themselves beneath the corners of the stone ; and others bent themselves beneath the sides of the stone, and so they bore all the stones ; and they carried them through the gates even as they were commanded, and they gave them to the men for the building of the tower, and they, having the stones, began to build. Now, the tower was being built on the great rock, and above the gate, and those ten stones were fitted together as a foundation for the building of the tower, but the rock and the gate supported the whole tower ; and after the ten stones other twenty-five went up from the abyss, and these were fitted into the building of the tower, being carried by the virgins even as the former ones ; and after these there came up thirty-five, and these likewise were fitted into the tower ; and after these there went up other forty stones, and these all

were cast into the building of the tower. And the stones ceased coming up from the abyss, and they who were building ceased for a little.

And, again, the six men commanded the multitude of the people to bring stones from the mountains for the building of the tower. There were brought, therefore, from all the mountains stones of different colours, and after that they had been shaped by the men they were given unto the virgins ; but the virgins carried them through the gate, and gave them for the building of the tower. But when the variegated stones were placed in the tower, they became all white alike, and lost their variegated colours. And some of the stones were given by the men for the building, and did not become bright, but were found to remain such as they were placed ; for they were not given by the virgins, neither were they brought through the gate. These stones, therefore, were unseemly in the building of the tower. And the six men when they saw the unseemly stones in the building commanded them to be removed, and to be taken away to their former places from which they had been brought. And they were removed one by one and laid aside. Then they said unto the men who were bringing the stones out, " Do not ye at all bring the stones for the building ; but place them beside the tower, that the virgins may bring them through the gate and give them for the building ; for if they said, they are not brought through the gate by the hands of these virgins, they are not able to

change their colour. Labour ye not, therefore," they said, "in vain."

## V.

And the building ended on that day, but the tower was not finished ; for it was to be carried up still further hereafter. And there was a cessation of the building, and the six men commanded those who were building all to retire a little and rest ; but they commanded the virgins not to retire from the tower. And it seemed unto me that the virgins were left for the purpose of guarding the tower. And after they had all departed and were resting, I said unto the shepherd, "Master, wherefore was the building of the tower not finished?" "The tower," he saith, "cannot yet be finished, unless its master first come and try the building, in order that if any stones be found unsound he may change them, for the tower is built in accordance with his will." "I should like, Master," I said, "to know concerning this tower? What meaneth the building of it? and concerning the rock, and gate, and the mountains, and the virgins, and the stones which went up from the abyss, and were not hewn in the quarry, but went, just as they were, into the building? Why were there first ten stones laid for the foundation, then twenty-five, then thirty-five, then forty? and concerning the stones that went unto the building and were taken away again and removed to their own place? Concerning all these things, Master, refresh my soul and make them known unto me,"

"Thou shalt know all these things," he said unto me, "unless thou be found eager to no purpose. For after a few days we will come hither, and thou shalt see the rest of the things that are coming upon this tower, and shalt understand accurately all the similitudes." After a few days, therefore, we came unto the place where we had been seated, and he said unto me, "Let us go unto the tower, for the owner of the tower is coming to survey it." And we came unto the tower, and there was no one at all by it, except the virgins alone. And the shepherd asked the virgins if the master of the tower had come; and they said that he was about to come to survey the building.

## VI.

And, lo, after a little time I beheld an array of many men coming, and in the midst was a certain man of lofty stature, so that he overtopped the tower, and the six men who worked at the building were with him, and many others of a glorious appearance were around him; and the virgins who watched the tower ran up and kissed him, and began to walk near him around the tower. And the man surveyed the building with such accuracy that he felt every stone separately, and, holding a certain rod in his hand, he struck each of the stones of the building thrice with it. And when he struck them, some of them became as black as soot, and some became scurfy, and some split, and some became chipped,



and some turned neither white nor black, and some became rough, and did not coincide with the other stones, and some became covered with spots. These were the varied aspects of the stones that were found unsound for the building. He commanded, therefore, all these to be removed from the tower, and to be placed beside the tower, and other stones to be brought and to be put into their place. And the builders asked him from what mountain he would command them to be brought and put into their place; and he commanded them not to be brought from the mountains, but he commanded them to be brought from a certain plain that was near. And the plain was digged, and there were found bright square stones, and some also were round; and as many stones as there were anywhere in that plain, they were all brought and carried through the gate by the virgins. And the square stones were hewed and put into the place of those that were taken away; but the round ones were not put into the building, because they were hard to be shaped, and seemed to be slow in being hewed. But they were placed beside the tower, as though about at some future time to be shaped and placed in the building, for they were very splendid.

## VII.

When the man, who was glorious in appearance, and lord of the whole tower, had finished these things, he called the shepherd, and gave unto him

all the stones that were lying beside the tower which had been cast away from the building, and said unto him, "Purify these stones diligently, and use for the building of the tower those that are able to fit with the others; but cast afar from the tower those that do not fit." And when he had commanded these things to the shepherd, he departed from the tower with all those with whom he had come; but the virgins stood around the tower watching him. I said unto the shepherd, "Can these stones that have been rejected go into the building of the tower?" And he answered and said unto me, "Thou seest these stones?" "Master," I replied, "I see them." "I," he said, "will shape the greater part of these stones, and put them into the building, and they will fit with the rest of the stones." "Master," I say unto him, "how can they, after that they have been cut about with the chisel, occupy the same space?" He answered and said unto me, "As many as shall be found small shall be placed in the midst of the building; and as many as shall be greater shall be placed outside, and shall hold them together." And when he had thus spoken he said, "Let us go, and after two days let us come and purify these stones, and place them in the building; for it is necessary that all things that are around the tower should be purified, lest the master should come suddenly and should find the things about the tower filthy, and should be angry, and these stones should not go into the building of the tower; and I should seem to the master to be care-

less." And after two days we came unto the tower, and he said unto me, "Let us survey all the stones, and see which are able to go into the building." I said unto him, "Yea, Master, let us survey them."

### VIII.

And after we had begun, we first surveyed the black stones, and they were found to be just as they were when they were put out of the building. And the shepherd commanded them to be removed from the tower and put on one side, and he surveyed those that were scurfy, and he took many of them and shaped them, and commanded the virgins to take them away and place them in the building. And the virgins took them away and placed them in the midst of the building of the tower; but he commanded the remainder to be placed with the black ones. Then he surveyed those that were split; and many of them he shaped, and commanded them to be carried away by the virgins to the building. And they were placed outside, because they were found to be sounder than the others. But the remainder could not be hewed into shape because of the multitude of the clefts in them; for this cause they were cast out of the building of the tower. Next he surveyed those that were chipped; and many black ones were found among them, and some had great clefts; and he commanded these also to be placed among the rejected ones. But when he had purified and shaped those that remained, he com-

manded them to be placed in the building. But the virgins, when they had raised them to the midst of the building, fitted them in; for these stones were weaker than the others. Then he surveyed those that were half white and half-black, and many of these were found to be black, and he commanded them to be removed, together with those that had been cast aside. But all the remainder were taken away by the virgins; for, being white, they were fitted into the building by the virgins themselves; and they were placed outside, because they were found sound, so that they were able to bind together those that were placed in the middle; for none of them at all had been chipped. Then he surveyed the rough and the rugged, and a few of them were cast aside, because they could not be hewed into shape, for they were found exceedingly rugged; but the remainder of them were hewed into shape, and were removed by the virgins, and were fitted into the middle of the building of the tower, for they were weaker than the others. Then he surveyed those that had spots, and of them a very few had grown black, and were thrown aside to the remainder; but those that were left, even these were found bright; and they were fitted by the virgins into the building, and they were placed outside, owing to their strength.

## IX.

Then he proceeded to survey the white and the

round stones, and said unto me, "What shall we do with these stones?" "How, Master, should I know," I reply. "Perceivest thou, therefore, nothing concerning them?" "I, Master," I reply, "have not this art, nor am I a mason, nor can I understand." "Perceivest thou not," said he, "that they are very round? but if I wish to make them square, a great deal must be cut off from them, for some of them must of necessity be placed in the building." "If therefore, Master," I say, "it is necessary, why troublest thou thyself, and dost not select for the building such as thou wishest, and fit them into it?" And he chose from them the black and shining ones, and hewed them into shape; but the virgins took them away, and fitted them to the outer part of the building. But those stones that remained, and were over, were taken away and laid aside in the places from whence they were brought. But they were not cast aside, because, he said, "there remaineth still a little of the tower to be built, but the Lord of the tower wisheth all the stones to be fitted into the building, because they are exceeding beautiful." Then twelve women were called, most beauteous in form, clad in black, and having their hair loosened; and they appeared unto me to be fierce. And the shepherd commanded them to raise the stones that had been cast out of the building, and to take them away to the mountains from whence also they had been brought. Then they were glad, and carried away all the stones,

and placed them in the places from which they had been taken. And after that all the stones had been taken away, and no stone lay any longer around the tower, he saith, "Let us go round the tower and see that there be no fault in it." And I went round it with him. And when the shepherd saw that the tower was beautifully built, he was exceeding glad; for the tower was so well built that I loved the building of it. For it was so built that it seemed to have no joinings, but to have been made out of a single stone; and the stone work seemed to have been cut out of the rock, for it seemed to me to be all a single stone.

## X.

And I, as I walked with him, rejoiced at seeing such good things; and the shepherd saith unto me, "Go and bring unslaked lime and light clay, that I may fill up the shapes of the stones that have been brought and placed in the building; for everything round the tower must be made smooth." And I did as he commanded, and brought them unto him. "Help me," he said, "and the work will soon be completed." We filled up therefore the shapes of the stones that had gone into the building, and he commanded the parts around the tower to be swept, and be made clean. And the virgins took brooms and swept, and removed all the rubbish-heaps from the tower, and sprinkled water, and the spot became cheerful, and set off the tower well. The shepherd saith unto

me, "All things have been purified. If the Master come to survey the tower, He hath nothing for which to blame us." When he had said these things he would have departed ; but I caught hold of his wallet and began to adjure him by the Lord, that he would explain the things that he had showed me. He said unto me, "I have to rest a little, and then I will explain everything to thee. Wait for me here until I come." I said unto him, "Master, what shall I do since I am alone here?" "Thou art not alone," he saith, "for these virgins are with thee." "Give me therefore into their charge," I said. Then the shepherd called them and said unto them, "I give this man into your charge until I come," and so departed. And I was alone with the virgins; and they were somewhat joyous, and were friendly towards me, especially the four of them who were most glorious in appearance.

## XI.

The virgins say unto me, "The shepherd cometh not here to-day." "What, therefore," I say, "shall I do?" "Wait for him until he come," they reply; "and if he come he will speak with thee, and if he do not come thou shalt abide with us here until he come." I say unto them, "I will await him here until evening. But if he come not, I will depart unto my home, and return early in the morning." But they answered and said unto me, "Thou hast been committed to our care; thou

canst not depart from us." "How shall I remain?" I say. "Thou shalt pass the night with us," they reply, "as a brother, and not as a husband; for thou art our brother, and for the future thou art about to dwell with us, for we love thee much." But I was ashamed to remain with them; then she who seemed to be the first among them began to kiss me, (and the others, when they saw her kissing me, also began to kiss me), and to lead me round the tower, and to sport with me; and I, as though I had grown young, began to sport with them. Some began to dance, others to leap, others to sing; and I, keeping silence, walked with them round the tower, and was joyous with them, and when evening was come I wished to go unto my home. But they would not let me go, but detained me, and I remained with them during the night, and slept beside the tower. And the virgins spread their linen tunics on the ground, and made me recline in the midst of them, and they did nothing at all without prayer. And I prayed without ceasing with them, and no less than they did. And the virgins rejoiced while I thus prayed, and I remained there until the morrow, even until the second hour, with the virgins. Then came the shepherd, and said unto the virgins, "Have ye done him any injury?" "Ask him," they say. I say unto him, "Master, I rejoiced at remaining with them." "What hadst thou for supper?" he said. "Master," I reply, "I supped on the words of the Lord through the whole night." "Did they



treat thee well," he said. "Yea, Master," I reply. "Now," said he, "what wishest thou to hear first?" I say, "Master, even in the same order as thou showedst me from the beginning. I ask thee, Master, that, in the order that I shall enquire of thee, in that order thou wilt explain it." "As thou wishest," he said, "so also will I explain things unto thee, and will conceal nothing at all from thee."

## XII.

"First of all, Master," I say, "explain this unto me, what mean the rock and gate?" "This rock," he said, "and the gate are the Son of God." "Why," said I, "is the rock old, but the gate new?" "Listen," said he, "O foolish one, and understand. The Son of God is older than the whole of His creation; so that He was assessor to His Father in the creation of the world; on this account is he old." "But why, Master, is the gate new?" I say. "Because," he said, "He was made manifest at the consummation of the last days; on this account is the gate new, because they who are to be saved enter by it into the kingdom of God. Thou hast seen," he says, "the stones that enter through the gates to the building of the tower, and those that do not enter but are cast aside into a separate place." "Master," I reply, "I have seen them." "Just so," he says, "no one will enter into the kingdom of heaven unless he receive His holy name, for if thou wishedst to enter into a certain

city, and that city was walled round, and had but one gate, wouldest thou be able to enter into that city except by the gate which it hath? For how, Master," I said, "can it be otherwise?" "If, therefore, thou canst not enter into the city except by that gate; just so," he said, "a man cannot enter into the kingdom of God except by the name of the Son of God, who was loved by him. Thou sawest," he said, "the multitude who are building the tower." "I saw them, Master," I reply. "They," he said, "are all glorious angels. By them the Lord is surrounded, but the gate is the Son of God. This is the one approach unto the Lord; otherwise, therefore, shall no one come unto him except through His Son. Thou hast seen," he said, "the six men, and the glorious and great man in the midst of them, who walked around the tower and rejected the stones out of the building." "I have seen them, Master," I reply. "The glorious man," he said, "is the Son of God; and the six are the glorious angels who support Him on the right and on the left. None of these glorious angels will come unto God without Him; and whoever will not receive His name shall not enter into the kingdom of God."

### XIII.

"But what," I said, "is the tower?" "This tower," he said, "is the Church." "And who are these virgins?" "They are holy spirits; and men

cannot otherwise be found in the kingdom of God unless they put on their garment ; for if thou take the name alone but do not receive the garment from them thou profitest nothing, for these virgins are the powers of the Son of God. If thou bear the name but do not bear the power, thy bearing the name will be in vain. But the stones which thou sawest cast aside, these bore the name, but put not on the garment of the virgins." "Of what kind is their garment, Master?" say I. "The names themselves," he replied, "are their garment. Whosoever beareth the name of the Son of God, ought to bear also the names of these ; for the Son Himself beareth the names of these virgins. As many stones," he said, "as thou sawest come unto the building of the tower by the hands of these virgins, and abiding there, have put on their power. On this account thou seest the tower is made out of one stone with the rock. Thus, they who believe in the Lord through His Son, and have clothed themselves with these Spirits shall be one body, and the colour of their garments shall be one. And they who thus bear the names of the virgins have their habitation in the tower." "But for what reason," said I, "Master, were the stones cast away that were cast away, for they went through the gate, and by the hands of the virgins were placed in the building of the tower?" "Since thou troublest thyself about everything," he said, "and seekest out accurately, listen, concerning the stones that have been thrown aside. These all received the name of God, they received

also the power of these virgins; when, therefore, they had received these spirits they became strong, and were with the servants of God; and their spirit, and their body, and their garment were one, for they were of one mind and did the same things; but after a certain time they were persuaded by the women whom thou sawest clothed in black garments, beauteous in appearance, and having their shoulders exposed and their hair loose; and when they saw them they lusted after them and clothed themselves with their power, but they stripped themselves of the power of the virgins. These, therefore, were cast out from the house of God, and were handed over to those other women; but they who were not deceived by the beauty of the women remained in the house of God. Thou hast," he said, "the explanation of those that were rejected."

#### XIV.

"But what," said I, "Master, if these men, being such as they are, shall repent and lay aside their desire for these women, and shall return unto the virgins and walk in their power and in their deeds? Shall they not enter into the house of God?" "They shall enter," he said, "if they lay aside the deeds of these women and take again the power of the virgins, and walk in their deeds; for on this account was there also a cessation of the building, to the end, that if these repent they should go into the building of the tower, but if they repent not others

shall come, and these shall be utterly cast out. For all these things I gave thanks unto the Lord, because he had had compassion upon all those that called upon His name, and had sent the angel of repentance to us who had sinned against Him, and had refreshed our spirit, and when we were already ruined and had no hope of life, had renewed our life." "Now," said I, "Master, show me why is the tower not builded upon the ground, but upon the rocks and upon the gate?" "Art thou still," he said, "foolish and unwise?" "It is necessary," I said, "that I should ask thee all things, because I can understand nothing at all, for all these things are great and glorious, and difficult for men to understand." "Listen," he said, "the name of the Son of God is great and incomprehensible, and sustaineth the whole world. If, therefore, the whole creation is supported by the Son of God, what thinkest thou happeneth to them that are called by Him, and bear the name of the Son of God, and walk in His commandments? Seest thou what kind of men He supporteth? those who from their whole hearts bear His name. He, therefore, hath become their foundation, and supporteth them gladly, because they are not ashamed to bear His name."

#### XV.

"Show unto me, Master," I said, "the names of the virgins and of those women who are clad in

black garments." "Listen," he said, "to the names of the stronger virgins who stand in the corners. The first is Faith; the second, Temperance; the third, Power; the fourth, Long-suffering. But the others who stand in the midst of these have for their names—Simplicity, Harmlessness, Purity, Cheerfulness, Truth, Wisdom, Concord, Love. He who beareth these names and the name of the Son of God, will be able to enter into the kingdom of God. Listen," he said, "to the names of the women who have black garments. Of these the more powerful are four. The first is Unbelief; the second is Intemperance; the third is Disobedience; the fourth, Deceit. But their followers are called Grief, Wickedness, Wantonness, Anger, Falsehood, Folly, Evil-Speaking, Hatred. The servant of God who beareth these names shall see the kingdom of God, but shall not enter into it." "But what," I said, "are the stones out of the abyss that were fitted into the building?" "The first ten that are placed as the foundation are the first generation; but the twenty-five are the second generation of just men. The thirty-five are the prophets and ministers of God. The forty are the apostles and teachers of the preaching of the Son of God." "Wherefore, then, Master," said I, "did the virgins bestow these stones also on the building of the tower, after that they had carried them through the gates?" "For they," he said, "first bore these spirits; and they did not depart at all from each other, neither the spirits from the men, or the men from

the spirits ; but the spirits remained with them until their death ; and unless they had these spirits with them they would not have been useful for the building of the tower."

## XVI.

"Still further," said I, "explain unto me." "What seekest thou more?" he said. "Wherefore, Master," said I, "did the stones though they had borne these spirits, go up from the abyss, and be placed in the building of the tower?" "They were obliged," he said, "to go up through water to the end that they might be made alive; for they could not otherwise enter into the kingdom of God, except they laid aside the deadness of their life. These too, therefore, who had fallen asleep received the seal of the Son of God, for man is dead before he beareth the name of the Son of God ; but when he hath received the seal, he layeth aside his deadness and taketh up life. The seal, therefore, is the water. They go, therefore, down into the water dead and go up alive. To them also, therefore, this seal hath been preached, and they used it, that they might enter into the kingdom of God." "Wherefore, Master," said I, "did the forty stones which were with them ascend out of the abyss, since they already had the seal?" "Because," he said, "these apostles and teachers who preached the name of the Son of God, after that they had fallen asleep in the power and faith of the Son of God, preached also to them that were asleep, and gave them the seal of the preaching. Therefore they descended with

them into the water and again ascended out of it. But these descended alive and again ascended alive; but they who had fallen asleep before, descended dead but ascended living; by means of these, therefore, they were made alive, and came to the knowledge of the name of the Son of God. On this account they ascended together with them, and were fitted with them into the building of the tower, and were built up together with them, without being shaped in the quarry, for they died in righteousness and in great purity, only they had not this seal. Thou hast, therefore, the explanation of these things also."

## XVII.

"I have it, Master," I said. "Now, therefore, explain to me concerning the mountains. Why are their powers different and varied?" "Listen," he said. "These twelve mountains are the tribes that inhabit the whole world; now the Son of God hath been preached unto them by means of the apostles." "But explain to me, Master, why they are varied and why their powers are different." "Listen," he said. "These twelve tribes that inhabit the whole world, are twelve nations, and they are varied in understanding and mind. Now, just as thou seest these mountains are varied, such are the varieties in mind and understanding of these nations; and I will explain unto thee the action of each of them." "First," said I, "Master, explain unto me this, Why, though the mountains were thus varied, did their stones, when placed



in the building, became of one colour, namely bright, even as the stones that ascended out of the abyss?" "Because," he said, "all the nations that dwell under heaven, after that they have heard and believed, were called by the name of the Son of God. When, therefore, men had received the seal they had one disposition and one mind, and their faith was one and their love one, and they bore the spirits of the virgins together with the name. On this account was the building of the tower of one colour, even bright as the sun; but after that they came in together, and became one body, certain of them polluted themselves and were cast out of the race of the just, and became again even as they were before, or rather worse."

### XVIII.

"How, Master," said I, "did they become worse, after that they had known God." "He who knoweth not God," he said, "and doeth evil, hath a certain punishment for his wickedness; but he who hath known God no longer ought to be evil, but to do good. If, therefore, he who ought to do good do evil, seemeth he not to do greater evil than he who knoweth not God? On this account they who knew not God and did evil have been condemned to death; but they who, after they knew God and beheld His mighty works, did evil, shall be doubly punished and shall perish everlastingly. Thus, therefore, shall the Church of God be cleansed. But as thou

sawest the stones being cast from the tower, and given up to the evil spirits, and cast out from that place, so shall they also be cast out, and the body of those that have been purified shall be one, even as the tower after it had been purified was, as it were, made out of a single stone. So shall the Church of God be after it has been purified, and after that the wicked, and the hypocrites, and the blasphemers, and the double-minded, and they who work various kinds of iniquity have been cast out. After that these have been cast out, the Church of God shall be one body, one understanding, one mind, one faith, one love; and then shall the Son of God rejoice and be glad in them when He hath received back His people pure." "Everything, Master," said I, "is mightily and gloriously arranged. Further," said I; "explain to me, Master, the power and the actions of each of the mountains, to the end that every soul that trusteth in the Lord, after that it hath heard, may glorify His great, and wonderful, and glorious name." "Hearken," he said, "to the variety of the mountains and of the twelve nations."

### XIX.

"From the first mountain, which is black, they who have believed are of such a kind as this; apostates and blasphemers against the Lord and betrayers of the servants of God. For these there is no repentance, but there is death; and on this account also are they black, for verily their kind is a lawless one. But from the second mountain, which is bare, they

who have believed are of such a kind as this ; hypocrites and teachers of wickedness. And these are like unto the former, not having the fruit of righteousness, for even as this mountain is unfruitful so these men have indeed the name but are empty of faith, and there is no fruit of truth in them. Repentance, therefore, is appointed for them if they repent speedily, but if they delay, their death will be with the former." "Wherefore," said I, "Master, is there repentance for them but not for the former? for their actions are almost the same." "On this account," said he, "is repentance appointed for these, because they have not blasphemed their Lord, neither have they become betrayers of the servants of God, but through the lust of gain they have become hypocrites, and each hath taught according to the desires of sinful men. But they will pay a certain penalty; yet repentance is allowed them because they were not blasphemers or traitors."

## XX.

"But from the third mountain that hath thorns and briars, they who have believed are of such a kind as this ; certain from among them are rich, and others are entangled in much business. These, therefore, who are entangled in many and various affairs do not cleave unto the servants of God, but wander away, being choked by their business. But unwillingly do the rich cleave unto the servants of God, fearing lest they should be asked something by them.

Such as these, therefore, shall hardly enter into the kingdom of God. But for all these there is a repentance and a speedy one, in order that now in these days they may make amends for the things that they did not in the former times, and do some good ; then shall they live unto God ; but if they abide in their deeds they shall be delivered up unto those women, who shall put them to death."

## XXI.

" But from the fourth mountain, which hath much grass, the upper part of the grass being green and the part by the roots withered, some grass also being dried up by the sun, they who have believed are of such a kind as this. The double-minded, and they who have the Lord upon their lips but have Him not in their hearts ; on this account their foundations are dry and have no power, and their words alone live, but their deeds are dead. Such as these neither live nor are dead. They are, therefore, like the double-minded ; for the double-minded also are neither dry nor green, for they are neither alive nor dead. For as this grass, when it hath seen the sun, hath withered away, so the double-minded, when they hear of affliction, owing to their cowardice, serve idols and are ashamed of the name of their Lord. Such, therefore, are neither alive nor dead. But these too may live if they shall repent quickly ; but if they shall not repent, they are

already delivered over to the women who deprive them of their life."

## XXII.

"But from the fifth mountain that hath green grass and is rough, they who have believed are of such a kind as this: they are faithful but slow to learn, self-willed, and pleasers of themselves, wishing to know everything, they know nothing at all. Owing to this self-will of theirs, knowledge is far from them, and senseless folly hath entered into their hearts. They praise themselves as if they had knowledge, and though foolish themselves wish to be teachers of others. Owing to this their self-will many through exalting themselves have been made empty, for self-will and vain-confidence is a powerful demon. Of these, many have been rejected, but some have repented, and believed, and submitted themselves to those that have knowledge, knowing their own folly; and to the remainder who are of such a character repentance is open, for they did not become wicked, but rather foolish and senseless; these, therefore, if they repent shall live unto God, but if they repent not, they shall dwell with the women who work evil against them."

## XXIII.

"But from the sixth mountain that hath clefts great and small, and in the clefts withered grass, they who

have believed are of such a kind as this. They that have the small clefts are they who are at variance with each other, and by reason of their evil-speaking they have withered in the faith; but many of them have repented, and the remainder shall repent when they shall hear my commandments, for their evil-speaking is but small, and they shall quickly repent. But they who have great clefts, are they who abide in their evil-speaking and are malicious, having wrath against each other; these therefore have been cast away from the tower and rejected from its building. Such, therefore, hardly shall live. But if our God and Lord, who ruleth over all things and hath authority over the whole of His creation, bear not malice against those who confess their sins, but is merciful to them, shall man, who is corruptible and full of sin, bear malice against man, as though he were able to destroy or save him? I, the angel of repentance, say unto you, even to as many as hold this heresy, lay it aside and repent, and the Lord shall heal your former sins if ye purify yourselves from this demon; but if not ye shall be delivered over to him to be put to death."

#### XXIV.

"But from the seventh mountain on which the grass is green and flourishing, and the whole mountain fertile, where every kind of beast and the birds of heaven feed on the grass of the mountain, and the grass on which they feed becomes even more

luxuriant than before, they who have believed are of such a kind as this. They are always simple and harmless and happy, having nothing against each other, but always rejoicing over the servants of God, and clothed in the holy spirit of these virgins, and always having compassion on every man ; and out of their labours they have ministered unto every man without reproach and without doubting ; the Lord, therefore, beholding their simplicity and all their gentleness, hath enriched them in the toils of their hands, and hath made them prosperous in all their deeds. Now I, the angel of repentance, say unto you that are of such a character as this, Abide as ye are and your seed shall not be obliterated for ever. For the Lord hath proved you and hath enrolled you among our number, and your whole seed shall dwell with the Son of God ; for of His spirit have ye received."

#### XXV.

" But from the eighth mountain where were the many fountains, and where every creature of the Lord drank of the fountains, they who have believed are of such a kind as this. Apostles and teachers, who preached unto the whole world, and who taught gravely and purely the word of the Lord, and turned not aside at all unto evil desire, but walked always in righteousness and truth, even as they had received the Holy Spirit. The departure, therefore, of such as these is with the angels."

## XXVI.

“ But from the ninth mountain, which is desolate, and hath in it reptiles and creeping things that destroy men, they who have believed are of such a kind as this. Those that have spots, are servants that have served badly, and have deprived widows and orphans of their living, and have made gain for themselves from the service which they have received to perform. If, therefore, they abide in the same lust, they are dead, and there is no hope of life in them ; but if they turn and fulfil their ministrations with purity, they will be able to live. But they who are afflicted with scabs, these are they who have denied their Lord and have not returned unto Him, but have become barren and desert, not cleaving unto the servants of God, but being left alone, they lose their own souls ; for as the vine, when left in a vineyard, if it meet with neglect, is destroyed, and is wasted by the weeds, and in time becometh wild, and is no longer useful to its master, so such men as this have destroyed themselves, and, having become wild, are no longer useful to their master ; for these, therefore, there is repentance, unless they be found to have denied from their heart. But if any one be found to have denied from his heart, I know not if such an one be able any longer to live ; and I say not this with regard to these present days, so that any one who hath denied may receive repentance ; for it is impossible



that he who shall in the future deny his Lord should be saved. But for those who long ago denied Him there seemeth to be appointed repentance. If, therefore, any one is about to repent, let him be speedy, before the tower is finished ; but if he do not, he will be destroyed altogether by the women. And they who are chipped are the crafty and evil-speakers. And the reptiles whom thou sawedst on the ninth mountain are these. For, as the reptiles ruin and destroy many by their poison, so the words of such men as these corrupt and destroy man. These, therefore, are broken short from their faith through the conduct which they have in themselves ; but some have repented and have been saved, and the remainder, who are of such a sort, are able to be saved if they shall repent ; but if they shall not repent they shall die, together with the women whose power they have."

## XXVII.

"But from the tenth mountain, where there were trees overshadowing certain sheep, they who have believed are of such a kind as this. Hospitable bishops who have gladly at all times received into their houses the servants of God without hypocrisy. But the bishops have always by their ministry protected those who were in want and the widows ; and their conduct was always pure. All these, therefore, shall be sheltered by the Lord for ever. Those, therefore, who have

done these things are glorified before God, and their place is already with the holy angels, if they abide until the end, serving the Lord."

## XXVIII.

"But from the eleventh mountain, where there were trees full of fruit, adorned with different kinds of fruit, they who have believed are of such a kind as this. They who suffered for the name of the Son of God, who both suffered readily with all their heart and gave up their lives." "Wherefore," said I, "Master, have all the trees fruit, but some of the fruit is fairer to look upon than the others?" "Listen," he said. "As many as have ever suffered for the name of the Lord are glorified before God, and all their sins have been taken away, because they suffered for the name of the Son of God. But why their fruits are varied, and which of them are superior, hearken. As many," he said, "as when brought before authority, and questioned, have not denied, but suffered readily, these are the more glorified before the Lord, and the fruit of these is more excellent; but as many as were cowardly and doubted, and reasoned in their hearts whether they should deny or confess, and afterwards suffered, the fruits of these were less, because this design entered into their hearts; for that they should deny their own Lord is an evil design. Do ye, therefore, who counsel such things, beware lest this design abide in your

hearts, and ye die unto God. But ye who have suffered for His name ought to glorify God, because God hath thought you worthy to bear His name, and that all your sins should be healed. Rather, therefore, deem yourselves happy, and think ye that ye have done a great deed, if any of you suffer for the sake of God. For your life is the gift of God, and yet ye know it not; for your sins had become heavy, and unless ye had suffered for the sake of the name of the Lord, ye would have died to God; owing to your sins. These things I say unto you who doubt concerning denial or confession. Confess that ye have the Lord, lest by denying ye be given over unto prison. For if the Gentiles chastise their slaves, if any one deny his lord, what think ye that your Lord will do who hath authority over all? Remove such designs from your heart, that ye may ever live unto God."

## XXIX.

"But from the twelfth mountain, which is white, they who have believed are of such a kind as this. They are as young children into whose hearts no evil cometh, nor did they know what evil was, but always continued in innocency. Such as these, therefore, abide without doubt in the kingdom of God; because they have in nothing polluted the commandments of God, but have like infants continued all the days of their life in the same mind. As many, therefore, of you as shall abide and shall be as

children, having no vice, shall be more glorious than all who were mentioned before; for all children are glorious before God, and first in His sight. Blessed, therefore, are ye, even as many as remove from yourselves wickedness, and put on innocence. First of all, ye shall live unto God." And after he had finished the similitudes of the mountains, I say unto him, "Master, now explain to me concerning the stones that were taken from the plain and placed in the building, instead of the stones that were removed from the tower; and concerning the round ones that were placed in the building, and those that are still round."

### XXX.

"Listen," said he, "concerning all these. The stones that were taken from the plain and placed in the building of the tower, instead of those that were thrown aside, are the roots of this white mountain. Since, therefore, the believers from the white mountain have all been found innocent, the Lord of the tower hath commanded these to be removed from the roots of the mountain to the building of the tower; for He knew that if these stones went into the building of the tower they would remain bright, and none of them would become black. But if he had thus determined besides concerning the other mountains, he would have found it necessary to visit the tower again and purify it. For all those have been found white who have believed, and who are about

to believe ; for they are of the same kind. Happy is this race, because it is innocent. Hearken, now, concerning those round and splendid stones ; all these are from the white mountain. Hearken now why they have been found round ; it is because their riches have darkened and obscured them a little from the truth, but they have never departed from God, nor has any evil word gone out of their mouth, but all equity, virtue, and truth. When, therefore, the Lord had seen the mind of these men, that they had been born good, and could be good, he commanded their wealth to be diminished, but not to be taken away altogether ; to the end that they might be able to do something good with that which was left to them, and they shall live unto God, because they come of a good kind. Therefore are they hewn round a little, and placed in the building of this tower."

### XXXI.

"But the other round stones, which have not yet been fitted into the building of the tower, and have not yet received the seal, have on this account been replaced in this position, because they are very round ; for the world and the vanity of their riches must be cut away from them, and thus will they fit in the kingdom of God. It is necessary that they should enter into the kingdom of God, for the Lord hath blessed this innocent race. No one of this race shall be missing ; even though any

of them, being tempted by the most wicked devil, shall have committed any sin, yet shall he quickly return unto his Master. Therefore I, the messenger of repentance, pronounce you to be happy, whoever of you are innocent as children, since your sort is good and honoured before God. I say unto all of you, whosoever have received this seal of the Son of God, keep simplicity, nor be mindful of offences, nor abide in malice. Lay aside, therefore, the memory of your offences and bitter-nesses, and ye shall be made to abide in one spirit; but heal your evil divisions, and remove them from yourselves, so that if the Lord of the flock come He may rejoice concerning you; but He will rejoice if He find everything whole, and if none of you shall be missing; but if He shall find any flock of them dispersed, woe unto the shepherds. But if the shepherds themselves shall have been dispersed, how will they answer Him for the flock? Will they say that they were harassed by the flock? they will not be believed. For indeed it is incredible that a shepherd should be injured by his flock; but he will be punished the more on account of his falsehood. And I am the shepherd, and it especially behoveth me to give an account for you."

### XXXII.

"Therefore amend yourselves while the tower is being built. The Lord dwelleth among men who love peace, because He loveth peace, but from

them that are contentious and abandoned he standeth afar off. Restore, therefore, to him your spirit whole, even as ye have received it; for when thou hast given a new garment to a fuller, and desirest to receive it back whole, if the fuller restore it unto thee rent, wilt thou receive it? Wilt thou not rather be angry and attack him with reproaches, saying unto him, 'I have given unto thee a garment whole; why hast thou rent it, and made it useless, so that it cannot be used on account of the rent which thou hast made in it?' Wilt thou not say all these things to the fuller, concerning the rent that thou foundest in thy garment? If therefore thou art angry concerning thy garment, and complainest because thou hast not received it back whole, what thinkest thou that the Lord will do unto thee? for He gave thee a perfect spirit, and thou hast restored it unto Him utterly useless, so that it can be of no use to its Master. For its use began to be of no use, when it was corrupted by thee. Will not the Lord, therefore, on account of this thy deed to His Spirit, do the same unto thee, and deliver thee unto death? Evidently, I say, He will do the same unto all whom He shall find to continue to remember offences. Despise not, therefore, His mercy, but rather honour Him, because He is so long-suffering with your sins, and is not like unto you. Repent, for it is useful for you so to do."

## XXXIII.

All these things that are writtten above, I, the shepherd, the messenger of repentance, have shown and spoken to the servants of God. If, therefore, ye shall believe and hear my words, and walk in them, and mend your ways, ye will be able to live ; but if ye abide in malice, and the memory of offences, no sinner of this kind shall live unto God. All these things which have to be said by me have been said unto you. The shepherd said unto me, "Hast thou asked me all the things?" and I said, "Yea, Master." "Wherefore hast thou not inquired of me," he said, "concerning the shape of the stones placed in the building, that I might explain unto thee why we have filled up the shapes?" And, I replied, "Master, I had forgotten." "Listen now," he said, "concerning these as well. These are they," he said, "who have heard my commandments, and have repented with all their hearts. But when the Lord saw that their repentance was good and pure, and that they could remain in it, He commanded their former sins to be obliterated ; these shapes were their sins, and they have been levelled, that they might not appear."



## The Tenth Similitude.

*Concerning Penitence and Alms-giving.*

### I.

**A**FTER that I had completely written this book, the messenger who had given me over to the shepherd came to the house in which I was, and sat upon a couch, and on his right hand stood the shepherd. Then he called me and said these things unto me. "I gave over thee and thy house to this shepherd, that thou mightest be able to be protected by him." "True, Master," I said. "If, therefore, thou desire to be protected from all vexation, and from all cruelty, and to have success in every good work and word, and the whole riches of equity, walk in those commands which he gave unto thee, and thou wilt be able to be master over all wickedness. For if thou keep these commandments, all the desires and the sweetness of this world shall be in subjection unto thee, and success shall follow

thee in every lawful undertaking. Take unto thyself the gravity and modesty of this man, and tell unto all that he is in great honour with God, and is a ruler of great power, and powerful in his office. To him alone in the whole world has authority over repentance been given. Doth he seem to thee to be powerful? But ye despise the gravity and moderation which he useth towards you."

## II.

I say unto him, "Ask him, Master whether from the time that he came into my house I have done anything out of order, or have offended him in anything." "I," he said, "know that thou hast done nothing out of order, and that thou art not about to do so. Now, therefore, I say these things unto thee, to the end that thou shouldest persevere. For he hath given a good opinion of thee unto me; but thou shalt say these words unto the rest, in order that they who either have repented or will repent may think the same things as thou dost; and that he may give a good report of them unto me, and I unto the Lord." And I say, "Master, I declare unto all men the mighty works of God. But I hope that all they who love these things, and have sinned in time past, will repent when they have heard these things, and recover their life." "Remain steadfast," he said, "in this ministry and accomplish it. Whoever fulfil the commands of this man shall have life; and this man will have great honour before the

Lord. But whoever do not keep the commands of this man, fly from their life and despise this man. But he hath his honour before God. Whoever, therefore, shall despise him, and not follow his commands, deliver themselves to death, and each of them shall be guilty of his own blood. But I charge thee to obey his commandments and thou shalt have a remedy for thy former sins."

### III.

"But I have sent these virgins unto thee that they may dwell with thee, for I have seen that they are friendly toward thee; therefore thou shalt have them as thine assistants, so that thou mayest be the better able to keep the commands of this man; for it is impossible that these commands should be kept without these virgins; and I see that they are glad to be with thee. But I also will give commands unto them that they do not at all depart from thy house. But do thou purify thy house, for in a chaste house they dwell gladly, for they are pure and chaste and industrious, and have every grace before the Lord. If, therefore, they shall find thy house pure, they will remain with thee; but if the slightest impurity shall happen to be there, they will forthwith depart from thy house; for these virgins love no pollution." I say unto him, "I hope, Master, that I shall please them, so that they may always dwell willingly in my house; and even as he to whom thou hast given me over maketh no complaint about

me, so neither shall they complain about me." He said unto the shepherd, "I see the servant of God is willing to live and to keep these commandments, and that he will place the virgins in a pure habitation." When he had said these things he delivered me over again to the shepherd, and called the virgins and said unto them, "Because I see that ye dwell willingly in the house of this man, I commend him and his house unto you, that ye should not at all depart from his house." But the virgins heard these words gladly.

#### IV.

The angel then said unto me, "Act vigorously in this service, and proclaim to every man the mighty works of God, and thou shalt have favour in this service. Whosoever, therefore, shall walk in these commandments shall live and be happy in his life; but whosoever shall neglect them shall not live, and shall be unhappy in his life. Charge all men who are able to do good that they cease not from so doing: for it is useful for them to practise good works. Now I say that every man ought to be rescued from troubles; for he who is in need and suffereth troubles in his daily life, is in great torment and want. Whosoever, therefore releaseth a soul of this kind from want, shall acquire great joy for himself; for he who is vexed by trouble of this kind, is afflicted with the same trouble as he who is in chains. For many cause death to themselves on

account of calamities of this kind, because they are not able to bear them. He who is aware of the trouble of a man of this sort, and doth not rescue him, committeth a great crime, and is guilty of his blood. Do ye, therefore, even so many as have received good from God, perform good works ; lest while ye are delaying to do them the building of the tower be finished, and ye be cast out of the building ; for no other tower is now built. For your sake the work of building hath been interrupted. Unless, therefore, ye make haste to act rightly, the tower will be finished, and ye will be shut out." Then, after he had thus spoken with me, he rose from the couch, and when he had taken hold of the shepherd and the virgins he departed. But he said unto me that he would send the shepherd and the virgins back to my house.—AMEN.



## NOTES.

### THE VISIONS.

#### VISION I.—CHAP. I.

*He who had brought me up.*



HE introductory sentence varies a good deal in the different versions." The Vatican Latin Version and the Codex Lipsiensis' commence thus:—"He who had brought me up sold a certain damsel at Rome. After many years I met her again, and began to love her as a sister." The Palatine Latin version gives :—"He who had brought me up sold me in the city of Rome to a certain woman named Rada. A long time after I recognised her, and began to love her as a sister." With this the Codex Sinaiticus and the Æthiopic version agree, giving the name as Rhoda. It has not been considered necessary in this edition to give the various readings. They are extremely numerous, but do not, except in one or two instances where they have been noticed, affect the sense to any appreciable extent. The meaning is almost always the same, but the form of expression varies in the Greek, Latin, and Æthiopic versions, to an extraordinary extent.

*As I went into the Villages.*

The country here alluded to is apparently the district between Rome and Ostia. The Palatine manuscript has :  
"And while I was considering these things alone, and had

come to the city of Ostia, and was rejoicing in all the creatures of God, because they are great and beautiful and powerful, as I walked I fell asleep." The Via Ostiensis still extends from Rome to Ostia, a distance of about sixteen miles. It skirts the course of the Tiber, and passes through a pretty pastoral district, at present almost uninhabited, but doubtless, in the first and second centuries A.D., full of villages. What the wilderness was, through which Hermas imagines himself to have been carried, of course we cannot say, but there is a wild district at the mouth of the Tiber, full of marshes and watercourses, which might have suggested the district of the vision. Ostia, which the writer of this note visited in the course of last year, would be unapproachable after rain, were it not for a causeway that conducts over the marshes. On the right hand lies the wild district of the Isola Sacra, and on the left commence the Pontine Marshes, stretching for miles along the coast. The whole scene is picturesque to a very high degree, and well calculated to inspire a man of visionary or mystical temperament. Ostia, which is now in ruins, was undoubtedly, at the period when the Shepherd was written, a populous and flourishing town. But there is no reason to suppose that the Isola Sacra was ever inhabited, and the marsh district along the coast must have been in much the same condition as at present. It is in this singular region at the mouth of the Tiber that we must place the opening scenes of the Shepherd. The Vatican manuscript states:—"The spirit seized me and bore me through a certain district to the right hand, through which no man could travel." The Palatine "bore me along a certain steep way."

#### VISION II.—CHAP. I.

##### *Now I went into the Villages.*

The Vatican and the Palatine versions place the second vision at Cumæ. "As I was journeying from Cumæ," Vat.

“As I was travelling in the country of the Cumæans,” Pal. It is possible, however, that this is a mistaken translation of the Greek κώμας. *els kōmas* is the reading of the Codex Sinaiticus, with which the Æthiopic version agrees, *els kōmhn* of the Codex Lipsiensis. Cumæ would have been Κοῦμαι, which is not found in either of the Greek texts. The reading of Cumæ seems to be supported by the circumstance that Hermas mistakes the old woman, the personification of the Church, for the Sibyl, who had her habitation in the neighbourhood.

*The words I could not comprehend.*

This is apparently an allusion to the ancient method of writing, in which word followed word continuously without any interval; consequently in copying an unknown language the transcriber would not be aware where one word ended and another began.

CHAP. III.

*Maximus.*

Maximus is an unknown person. The name had disappeared from the Latin versions. “But thou shalt say, Behold a great tribulation cometh,” Vat. “But thou sayest, Behold a great tribulation cometh,” Pal. The name Maximus is found in the Codex Sinaiticus, in the Codex Lipsiensis, and in the Æthiopic version.

*Eldad and Modad.*

This is the only quotation by name from any book in the Shepherd. The Apocryphal book of Eldad and Modad has long perished. It is mentioned in the Stichometria of Nicephorus about 820 A.D., and this is apparently the latest mention of it. Eldad and Modad are names that occur in Numbers xi. 26, 27, “But there remained two of the men in



the camp, the name of the one was Eldad, the name of the other Medad : and the spirit rested upon them ; and they were of them that were written, but went not out unto the tabernacle ; and they prophesied in the camp. And there ran a young man, and told Moses, and said, Eldad and Medad do prophesy in the camp. And Joshua, the son of Nun, the servant of Moses, one of his young men, answered and said, My lord Moses, forbid them. And Moses said unto him, Enviest thou for my sake ? would God that all the Lord's people were prophets, and that the Lord would put his spirit upon them !" The passage quoted much resembles Psalm xxxiv. 18, "The Lord is nigh unto them that are of a broken heart, and saveth such as be of a contrite spirit."

#### CHAP. IV.

##### *One to Clement and one to Grapte.*

This passage concerning Clement and Grapte completes the list of persons mentioned by name in the Shepherd. The others are Maximus, Eldad, and Modad, and the name of the author, or supposed author, Hermas.

Grapte is an unknown person. She is supposed to have been a deaconess, and even the wife of Hermas, but these are mere conjectures. The name is omitted in the Palatine, but is found in the Vatican Latin version. The version of the Palatine is as follows :—"And write thou the books ; one thou shalt send to Clement, which, when it has been written, he shall send to the other countries. But they, as has been stated above, shall admonish the widows and orphans."

Clement is generally supposed to have been the Bishop of Rome, and the passage has been considered to convey an allusion to his Epistles to the Corinthians, as though it were known to be part of his office to communicate with the foreign churches.

"His contemporary, Hermas, the author of the Shepherd,

represents himself as directed by the angelic messenger to deliver a copy of the book with which he is charged to Clement, that he may communicate it to foreign churches, for this function belongs to him."—Professor Lightfoot, *S. Clement of Rome*, p. 3.

This is possibly correct. But as the date and authorship of *Hermas* is a matter of controversy, and as the Clement mentioned here is not stated to be the Bishop of Rome, it would have been as well [not to have made the statement as an ascertained fact. The majority of modern critics would not allow that *Hermas* and Clement of Rome were contemporaries. Clement died in the third year of Trojan, about 100 A.D., and though it is possible that the *Shepherd* was written during his life-time, it seems most probable that it was not.

The passage derives an additional interest from the fact that it is commented on at some length by Origen.—*De Principiis*, iv. 11; *Opp.* i. 168. "For just as man is composed of body, soul, and spirit, so in like manner is the Scripture, which hath been by the dispensation of God given unto men for salvation. On this account we thus expound what is written in the book of the *Shepherd*, which is by some despised, concerning the command given to *Hermas* to write the book, and afterwards to announce to the elders of the Church the things that he had learned from the Spirit. And these are his words: 'Thou shalt write the books, and shall give one unto Clement and one to Grapte; and Grapte shall exhort the widows and the orphans, and Clement shall send unto the cities that are without; but thou shalt announce it unto the elders of the Church.'

"For Grapte who exhorteth the widows and orphans, is the bare letter (of Scripture) which exhorteth those that are children in spirit, and are not yet able to claim God as their Father; and on this account are they called orphans; to exhort those too, who are no longer bound to a lawless husband, but are widows, because they are not yet worthy of the bridegroom. But Clement is he who hath already departed from

the letter, and he is said to send what has been spoken to the cities without, that is to say, to souls that are outside carnal things, and thoughts concerning what is below. But the actual disciple of the Spirit is ordered to announce, not by means of letters, but by living words, to the elders of the whole Church who have grown grey with thought."

Origen, it will be remarked, quotes the passage as Scripture, though he acknowledges that its authority was not universally accepted.

### VISION III.—CHAP. II.

#### *A great tower.*

The passage concerning the building of the tower is referred to by Origen in his Commentary on Hosea. "And in the Shepherd, with regard to the building of the tower, which is made of many stones, but the building appeareth to be one stone, what else signifieth the Scripture, but the concord and unity made up of many things?"—Origen, Opp. iii. 439.

#### *Being built upon the waters.*

The tower built upon the waters was probably suggested by the structures on the Alban Lake. The scene described is just what might have been witnessed from the ridge which separates the lake from the Campagna, in the early period of the empire. Numerous villas were then erected along the shore, especially in the immediate neighbourhood of the emissarium; some of these projected into the lake itself, where their substructures may still be traced. The stone has evidently been brought from some distance, and the building must have involved great labour and expense. A busy scene of this kind, the building being pressed forward with great haste, as was usual with the impatient Roman nobility, doubtless supplied the ground-work for the simile which forms the leading idea of the Shepherd.

## CHAP. III.

*By enquiring therefore shalt thou find.*

Compare St. Matt. vii. 7 ; St. Luke xi. 9.

## CHAP. VIII.

*They are called, the one simplicity, &c.*

This description of the virtues is referred to by Clement of Alexandria.—Strom. ii. 12, 55, p. 458. It may be compared with 2 Peter i. 5-7.

## CHAP. IX.

*Hearken unto me, ye children.*

Addressed apparently, not to the children of Hermas, but to Christians generally, the sons of the Church.

## CHAP. X.

The description of the different forms of the old woman is quoted by St. Jerome.—Commentary in Hosea vii. 9 ; Opp. vi. 75.

## VISION IV.—CHAP. I.

*The Campanian Road.*

Apparently the Via Appia, which led from Rome to Aricia, and through it to the south of Italy. I should be disposed to place the scene of this vision in the neighbourhood of Aricia, about twelve miles from Rome. The Latin versions here give a different sense. "The place is seldom traversed." But both the Sinaiticus and Lipsiensis read "*ῥᾱδίως*, easily," which is certainly more in accordance with what we know to have been the condition of the Via Appia during the empire. The villa would thus be one of those in the neighbourhood of Rome. The fifth vision takes place in Rome itself.

*I beheld a vast monster.*

Compare Revelations xii. 3.

*Adorned as though going from the bridal chamber.*

Compare Revelations xxi. 2.

## CHAP. II.

*Thou shalt cast thy care upon God.*

Compare 1 Peter v. 7.

*Whose name is Thegri.*

This passage about the angel Thegri is generally considered to be the one referred to by St. Jerome, Comment. in Habac. i. 14: "Ex quo liber ille Apocryphus stultitiæ condemnandus est, in quo scriptum est quendam Angelum nomine Tyri præesse reptilibus." It should be remarked, however, that St. Jerome does not here mention Hermas, and that the name of the angel is not the same. The angel is called Hegrin in the Vatican and Tegri in the Palatine version. Cf. the notes of Dressel and Hefele on the passage.

*Better had it been for them.*

Compare St. Matthew xxvi. 24.

## CHAP. III.

*As it were in the fire.*

Compare 1 Peter i. 7.

## THE COMMANDMENTS.

### COMMANDMENT I.

*First of all believe, &c.*

This is the most famous passage in the Shepherd, and is quoted repeatedly in the works of the Fathers from the time of Irenæus. Cf. Euseb. Eccles. Hist. v. 8, 7. Origen de

Princip. I, 3, 3; II, I, 5. Athanasius de Incarnatione tribi, cap. 3. De Decretis Nicænæ. Synodi, cap. 18. Nicetas ad Gregor. Naz. Orat. xl.

It was made use of by the Arians in support of their tenets, but was accepted by the orthodox as supplying a sound expression of the doctrine of the unity of God.

The Latin versions differ slightly from the Greek. The Vatican version gives—"Primum omnium crede, quod unus est Deus, qui omnia creavit et consummavit, et ex nihilo omnia fecit. Ipse capax universorum solus immensus est, qui nec verbo definiri, nec mente concipi potest. Crede igitur in eum, et time eum, et timens habe abstinentiam. Hæc custodi, et abiice abs te omnem concupiscentiam et nequitiam et indue virtutem justitiæ et vives Deo, si custodieris mandatum hoc."

The Palatine Latin version gives—"Primo omnium crede, esse unum Deum, qui omnia creavit et consummavit, et ex nihilo cuncta fecit. Ipse caput universorum, solus immensus, qui nec verbis definiri, nec mente concipi potest. Huic ergo crede, et metue eum, metuque accepto tene abstinentiam. Hæc custodi, et abicis a te omnem nequitiam, omnemque indues virtutem æquitatis, et vives Deo, si custodieris hoc mandatum."

This commandment, together with a very considerable portion of the later part of the Shepherd, is found in the author known as Pseudo-Athanasius ad Antiochum. A considerable portion also occurs in the Homilies of Antiochus. It has not been found practicable in a work of this kind to give any representation of these quotations, or of the relation which they bear to the ordinary text of Hermas. The reader will find the passages given at length in third part of the *Novum Testamentum extra Canonem Receptum* of Hilgenfeld, where they are printed on the same page with the Greek text.

#### COMMANDMENT IV.

This is perhaps the part of the Shepherd most open to animadversion, and in the earliest times (cf. Tertullian de Pudicitia, c. x. and xx.) exposed the work to considerable

obloquy. It may be perhaps regarded as supplying the reason why it eventually fell into disrepute. Most probably, however, this lax method of regarding violations of the marriage tie arose from an excessive desire to preach the efficacy of repentance; though the command imposed upon the husband to receive back the guilty wife, if she repent, is one that would find few defenders in any state of society.

#### CHAP. I.

*Let him put her away.*

Compare St. Matt. v. 32; xix. 9.

#### CHAP. II.

*Repentance is wisdom.*

This passage concerning repentance is quoted by Clem. Alexand., strom. ii. 12, 55.

#### COMMANDMENT VI.

This description of the good and bad angels attendant upon man seems to have been a favourite with Origen, who alludes to it, De Princip. iii. 2, 4. Homil. xii. in Luc. Homil. xxv. in Luc. Compare also Cassianus Collat. viii. 17, xii. 12.

#### COMMANDMENT VII.—CHAP. I.

The commencement of this commandment is alluded to by Clement of Alexandria, strom. ii. 12, 55.

#### COMMANDMENT XI.—CHAP. I.

*He saith certain true words.*

Quoted by Clement of Alexandria, strom. i. 17, 85.

## COMMANDMENT XII.—CHAP. IV.

*Such as have the Lord on their lips.*

Compare Isa. xxix. 13; Matt. xv. 8; John xii. 40; 2 Cor. iii. 14.

## CHAP. V.

*If therefore ye resist him.*

Compare the Epistle of St. James iv. 7.

## CHAP. VI.

*From him who is all-powerful.*

Compare Epistle of St. James iv. 1.

## THE SIMILITUDES.

This, in some respects, the most pleasing part of the Shepherd, is evidently an attempt to draw religious instruction from the ordinary scenes of Italian country life. Just as the familiar incidents of eastern life supplied the writers of the New Testament with a vehicle for religious instruction, so the writer of the Shepherd found in the vineyards, fields, and mountains of central Italy, a means of emblematical teaching which he has used with great simplicity, and yet not without considerable power. It will be remarked that Hermas resorts more to the simple objects of the country, and less to the incidents of domestic life, than our Lord and His apostles, and there is little pathos or personal interest in his descriptions. With the exception of the fifth Similitude, there is not much in this portion of the work that requires explanation. The subjects and the method of treatment are tolerably familiar to most of us. The Similitudes are frequently quoted by Ori-



gen,<sup>1</sup> and occasionally by Clement of Alexandria,<sup>2</sup> but they do not seem to have attracted much attention from the other ecclesiastical writers.

"The Similitudes generally deserve to be accurately compared with the Gospel parables, cf.

Matt. xiii. 5-8, with Sim. ix. 19, 20, 21.

Matt. xiii. 31, 32, with Sim. viii. 3.

Matt. xviii. 3, with Sim. ix. 29."

Westcott's *History of the Canon of the New Testament*, p. 176. Ed. 2.

### SIMILITUDE V.

It does not enter into the plan of this edition to discuss the theological character of the Shepherd,<sup>3</sup> but it may be remarked that this Similitude is regarded by Hilgenfeld, as containing a compendium of the religious doctrines of Hermas.

#### <sup>1</sup> By Origen—

Sim. ii. Homil. in Josh. x. 1. Opp. ii. 423.

Sim. iii. In Matt. xxiv. 32. Opp. iii. 872.

Sim. vi. Hom. i. 1 in Ps. xxxvii. Opp. ii. 681.

Hom. viii. in Num. Opp. ii. 294.

Sim. viii. Hom. i. 5 in Ezek. Opp. iii. 358.

In Matt. xiv. 21. Opp. iii. 644.

Sim. ix. Hom. xiii. 3 in Ezek. Opp. iii. 404.

The admiration expressed by Origen for the Shepherd is worthy of notice. The passages quoted at length will give the reader a sufficient idea of the way in which he regarded it, evidently considering it to have been written by the friend of St. Paul, and to form a portion of the Scripture, yet aware that his view as to its authority was not universal.

#### <sup>2</sup> Clement of Alexandria—

Sim. ix. Strom. ii. 9, 43; vii. 6, 46.

<sup>3</sup> There are some excellent remarks on the theological character of Hermas in Mr. Westcott's work on the Canon of the New Testament, p. 168-179, 2d ed., though he perhaps takes too favourable a view of the subject, not alluding to the fanciful character and mysticism which form so great a defect in the work. The Prologomena to the *Novum Testamentum extra Canonem Receptum* of Hilgenfeld may be compared as giving an entirely different view.

In cap. v. occurs the supposed heretical passage (ὁ δὲ υἱὸς τὸ ἄγιον πνεῦμα ἐστίν) confounding the second and third persons of the Trinity. This has been omitted in the translation, as it does not occur in the Codex Lipsiensis, the Palatine, or the Æthiopic versions, and is not referred to in any of the early quotations from Hermas. Its heretical tendency is, however, a matter of controversy, as some writers would make the passage merely contain a reference to the Divine nature in Christ. Cf. Dressel's note on the passage. A somewhat similar passage is found in Sim. ix. cap. 1, and occurs both in the Greek and Latin versions.

#### CHAP. I.

##### *A station.*

The term was drawn from the language of military life among the Romans. "Statio de militari exemplo nomen accipit, nam et militia Dei sumus."—Tertul. de Orat. c. xiv. The original meaning was a post or station—in statione esse—to be on guard; in statione manere,—to keep at one's post. Hence the term was used to mean watches of the soldiers of Christ, voluntary fasting and prayer, generally continued till three in the afternoon, and for which Wednesday and Friday were chosen. Die stationis, nocte vigiliæ meminerimus. Tertul. de Orat. 29. Cf. Tertul. de jejun. c. 2. Gieseler, Eccles. Hist. i. 177. (English translation, Edinburgh, 1854).

The allusion to stations is one of the proofs that the Shepherd of Hermas belongs to a date later than that of the apostles. How late it would throw the work it seems difficult to decide. Mr Westcott (on the Canon of the New Testament, p. 173, 2d. ed.), following Hefele, has argued with a good deal of ingenuity in favour of the theory which makes the brother of Pius I. the author of the Shepherd, and would consequently fix the date between 139-150 A.D. It seems to me,

however, that the objection of Neander,<sup>1</sup> that it was scarcely possible that Irenæus and Clement of Alexandria would have quoted as Scripture the work of one so near to their own date, is fatal to this theory. Neander is followed by Canon Robertson.<sup>2</sup> Hilgenfeld, the latest editor, accepts the date of the Muratorian Canon, but doubts whether the work was really written by a brother of Pius I., on account of the severity with which the authorities of the Church are treated in it. The actual means for fixing the date are extremely slight. The deaths of the apostles are mentioned, and the allusions to stationes (and sub introductæ?—Sim. ix. 11) belong to the post-apostolic period; but there seems nothing in the book that might not have been written between 90 and 120 A.D. Hilgenfeld, though advocating a later date, would make 139-147 A.D. the latest period at which the Shepherd could have appeared. Cf. Hilgenfeld, *Prologomena to Hermas*, p. xx.

#### SIMILITUDE IX.

With the thirtieth chapter of the ninth Similitude we lose the guidance of the Greek version of the Codex Lipsiensis. The translation has consequently been completed from the Latin.

<sup>1</sup> "It may be very much doubted whether the Hermas of the Apostle Paul was really its author, although the other tradition also (cited in the poem against Marcion, ascribed to Tertullian, and in the fragment on the Canon of the New Testament, published by Muratori), which ascribes it to the brother of Pius, Bishop of Rome, about the year 156, is no less doubtful, since it is impossible to determine how much credit is due to these two documents; and the high reputation of the book in the times of Irenæus and Clement of Alexandria, can hardly be reconciled with the hypothesis of so late an origin."—Neander's *Church History*, vol. ii. p. 443. English translation. T. & T. Clark. Edinburgh, 1851.

<sup>2</sup> *History of the Christian Church*, vol. i. p. 7, note.

## CHAP. XI.

*As a brother.*

Mr. Donaldson (History of Christian Literature, vol. i. p. 265) argues, in my opinion correctly, that there is no valid reason for concluding that this passage contains an allusion to the practice of living with "subintroductæ," or nominal wives, though the custom is as old as the time of Irenæus, who, however, alludes to it as an error of the Valentinians (Irenæus, i. 1, 12). It afterwards became common among the unmarried clergy, and was denounced by Cyprian, and after him by several Synods (Cyprian, Epist., 5, 6; Can. Illib., 27; Ancyr., 19; Nicæn., 3). The resemblance in the passage of Hermas is most probably accidental, for there is no mention of the practice in the Orthodox Church before Tertullian (150-220 A.D.) (De Jejuniis, c. 17), though the relation itself might have existed, in isolated cases, at any period.

## CHAP. XX.

*For as it is.*

Compare St. Matt. xix. 23, 24.

## CHAP. XXIII.

*But if our God and Lord.*

Compare Epistle of St. James iv. 12.

## CHAP. XXIV.

*They have ministered unto every man.*

Compare Epistle of 1 James i. 5.

## CHAP. XXIX.

*And shall be as children.*

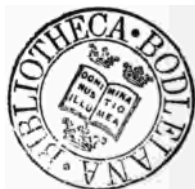
Compare St. Matt. xviii. 3.

## CHAP. XXXI.

*Innocent as children.*

Compare St. Matt. xviii. 3, xix. 14.

THE END.



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